

**IS SHE FIT TO BE GOVERNOR GENERAL?
PAUL WELLS DOES PAUL MARTIN'S HOMEWORK**

MACLEAN'S

CANADA'S WEEKLY NEWSMAGAZINE | www.macleans.ca

AUGUST 29 2005

EXCLUSIVE CANADA'S BEST SCHOOLS

- What makes them great (it's not money)
- How to turn a bad school around
- Putting kids ahead of red tape



**RIOTS, CORRUPTION,
VIOLENCE: CHINA'S
UNSEEN CRISES**

**A CBC LEGEND
CONSIDERS
THE LOCKOUT**

**WHEN YOU
REALLY NEED TO
SHIP AN ELEPHANT**

**LADY BLACK OF
NO FIXED ADDRESS**

\$4.95

35





Introducing the Chevrolet Uplander. A vehicle with room for all parts of your life. Thanks to split folding third row seats. Seatback compartments. And rear storage. There's even standard ABS brakes and OnStar. If you can fit it into your life, you can fit it into the Uplander. Visit gmcanada.com for details.



CONTENTS

COVER

42 Canada's best schools
Ten extraordinary high schools set standards of excellence.

FEATURES

34 Common Ground | Too late now
The appointment raised issues that needed to be discussed.

39 Opinion | What's on the line
Mark Stancovici on how ideology is threatening the CBC.

24 United States | 'Give us a chance'
The two main parties eagerly seek out new bases of support.

26 Essay | Media blackout
Ava Kurlish feels somehow less valuable than Palestinians?

28 Special Report | Ready for revolution
Amid the new wealth, poor Chinese are rising up in anger.

40 Trains | Divided by the tracks
An Ontario town is torn by questions of safety.

41 Business | Black's 'torpedo'
Only the threat of jail brought David Rodier to heel.

54 Profile | The story of Oh
Sandra Oh's marriage is in ruins, but her career is on fire.

57 Television | The tall invasion
The new season is overloaded with evil aliens.

33 The New-Canadian Establishment
Peter C. Newman presents an unusual pairing of adventures BROUGHT TO YOU BY CADILLAC.

54



22 Frank in front
The money's on McKenna as the next Liberal leader.

SECTIONS

4 The Mail
8 Maclean's 100 from our pages

9 Up front
The List ScoreCard

61 Book Talk
Opera singer Adrienne Pieczorika
Romie | Rocker Jacob Hoggard
Bestsellers list

MACLEANS.CA

WAKESTOCK
The world's largest wakeboarding competition landed in Toronto recently. See the photos from this extreme sport event. www.macleans.ca/gallery

UP TO THE MINUTE
From Canadian politics to entertainment. Visit our website for the latest headlines. www.macleans.ca

COLUMNS

12 Mianbridge on the Record
60 Over to You | Barbara Amiel
64 Paul Wells | The Back Page

WILL PHOTOGRAPH BY STEVE GALL, WARE UP BY SIMON GALLAGHER, CLAY BY MICHAEL BURNETT, TOP BY JEFFREY M. HARRIS AND GREGORY HARRIS. STYLING BY VANESSA RYAN. PHOTOGRAPH BY PETER BRUNNENBERG. VISIT OUR WEBSITE.



*"DO I LOOK FAT? I KNOW I SHOULDN'T BE
SO CONCERNED ABOUT MY WEIGHT. BUT SEEING
AS MY LEGS ARE ONLY 5 INCHES LONG,
I NEED ALL THE HELP I CAN GET."*

Pets can't talk. That's why, at Purina, we never stop listening to them, and learning from them. For instance, our 14-year long Life Span Study showed that dogs could enjoy up to 2 more healthy years when fed to their ideal body condition throughout their lives. It's just part of the expertise we've gained in partnership with various organizations, including universities and veterinarians. And it's expertise your dog can benefit from with our full line of adult and weight maintenance formulas. We're doing our best to get the word out. If he could, he'd tell you himself.



Optimal protein to-fat ratio.
Promotes whole-body wellness.SM



Real Taste in the #1 ingredient.
ONE can make a difference.SM



100% complete and balanced.
Wholehearted ingredients for a healthy dog.

'Wouldn't you agree the problem is with the criminals, not the tools they use? What's next, Canadian obesity linked to the use of American spoons?' —Michael Walker, *Vancouver Sun*

Goons with guns

One day after reading Clarke Gilling's special report on the growing problem of gun-running into Canada ("American guns, Canadian violence," Cover, Aug. 15), a friend of mine was mistaken by two punks brandishing a pistol. Luckily my friend was not hurt. But this assault occurred on a quiet residential street only steps from his house. The second scary point is that the statistics were no more than 35. The cops told my friend that this type of violence is now spreading. The assault has motivated me and I plan to write to politicians at every level of government to make sure that selling this sort of gunplay and violence becomes a priority. Canadians should not have to feel frightened every time they leave their houses. It's time to cut back our eyes from the wealthiest towns.

Steve Gies, Toronto

Gillis is right: Canadian violence is all the fault of the Americans. They are responsible for our legal system and for the policing of our communities. The Americans are also to blame for our immigration policies. Canada is a socialist nation and any time something goes wrong, it has to be the fault of those who live down south. Indeeds.

Lital Cohen, Toronto

There are only two ways to eliminate unwanted items from being made available to anyone who wants them. Close down and eliminate all sources that manufacture, grow or sell the items in question (an impossible task). Or go after the users. In the case of illegal firearms in Canada, make it an automatic three-year jail term for anyone found in possession of an unregistered weapon. Until our laws get tougher, we will never reduce or eliminate anything that we consider to be a problem in our society.

William Eason-Brown, White, Ont.

It's time for Canadians to stop blaming the United States for all our problems and to take responsibility for policing our own borders. For example, the \$1 billion the federal gov-



ernment spent registering and regulating legitimate Canadian gun owners would have purchased 300 Vehicle and Cargo Inspection System units.

Ed Anderson, Westchester, Ont.

If I'm an American who just read your story about the smuggling of American guns into Canada and their implication in crime, I'm shocked and upset. I have always been impressed by Canada's strong commitment to law and order and its strong laws in gun control. Tough gun controls need to be enacted in the U.S. as well so that the problems with gun violence in North America can be alleviated. Unfortunately, many Americans don't agree. When the U.S. Constitution was drafted in the late 1790s, the Second Amendment stated that "The right to bear arms, in order to maintain a well-regulated militia, shall not be infringed." Many Americans interpret that as meaning anybody should be allowed to own a gun at any time.

John Canas, Minneapolis

Gun crime escalation? Strange: indeed as Canada has followed British Columbia virtually banning the ownership of handguns and other weapons by its people. I suppose it's easier to disarm the people in countries that consider themselves safe rather than citizens. I would love nothing better than

MACLEAN'S

Editor-in-Chief
David Johnston

Managing Editor
Michael Ondaatje

Editorial Director
Michael Ondaatje

Executive Editor
Michael Ondaatje

Managing Editor
Michael Ondaatje

Managing Editor
Michael Ondaatje

Managing Editor
Michael Ondaatje

Managing Editor
Michael Ondaatje

Managing Editor
Michael Ondaatje

Managing Editor
Michael Ondaatje

Managing Editor
Michael Ondaatje

Managing Editor
Michael Ondaatje

Managing Editor
Michael Ondaatje

Managing Editor
Michael Ondaatje

Managing Editor
Michael Ondaatje

Managing Editor
Michael Ondaatje

Managing Editor
Michael Ondaatje

Managing Editor
Michael Ondaatje

Managing Editor
Michael Ondaatje

Managing Editor
Michael Ondaatje

Managing Editor
Michael Ondaatje

Managing Editor
Michael Ondaatje

Managing Editor
Michael Ondaatje

Managing Editor
Michael Ondaatje

Managing Editor
Michael Ondaatje

Managing Editor
Michael Ondaatje

Managing Editor
Michael Ondaatje

Managing Editor
Michael Ondaatje

Managing Editor
Michael Ondaatje

Managing Editor
Michael Ondaatje

Managing Editor
Michael Ondaatje

Managing Editor
Michael Ondaatje

Managing Editor
Michael Ondaatje

Managing Editor
Michael Ondaatje

Managing Editor
Michael Ondaatje

Managing Editor
Michael Ondaatje

Managing Editor
Michael Ondaatje

Managing Editor
Michael Ondaatje

Managing Editor
Michael Ondaatje

Managing Editor
Michael Ondaatje

Managing Editor
Michael Ondaatje

Managing Editor
Michael Ondaatje

Managing Editor
Michael Ondaatje

Managing Editor
Michael Ondaatje

Managing Editor
Michael Ondaatje

Managing Editor
Michael Ondaatje

Managing Editor
Michael Ondaatje

Managing Editor
Michael Ondaatje

Managing Editor
Michael Ondaatje

Managing Editor
Michael Ondaatje

Managing Editor
Michael Ondaatje

Managing Editor
Michael Ondaatje

Managing Editor
Michael Ondaatje

Managing Editor
Michael Ondaatje

Managing Editor
Michael Ondaatje



IBM WEBSPPHERE PRESENTS

YOU VS APPLICATION INTEGRATION COMPLICATION

★ FEATURING ★

POWER TO CONNECT VIRTUALLY ANY APPLICATION ON ANY PLATFORM
YEARS OF EXPERIENCE BUILDING COMPOSITE APPLICATIONS
EFFICIENCY — FLEXIBILITY

PLUS HEAVYWEIGHT GUESTS:

OPEN STANDARDS ★ EASE ★ AFFORDABILITY

IBM MIDDLEWARE.
POWERFUL. PROVEN.

RE-USE YOUR EXISTING I.T. INVESTMENTS
GET RINGSIDE AT
WWW.IBM.COM/MIDDLEWARE/CONNECT

to use our borders completely sealed off because we cannot rely on Canada to stand with us on the simplest of human rights: the right to defend oneself, best accomplished with personal arms and the courage and will to stand up for yourself!

D. Steven Goodwin, Intercession, Tenn.

The problem isn't the guns smuggled into Canada, but why the guns are in demand. There has been a breakdown in some parts of Canadian society where a few individuals believe it is acceptable to use force—and sometimes firearms—as part of their criminal lifestyle. Stopping these people from getting guns will not change their values or attitudes. Possibly the federal government should have spent more on jailing in Toronto, and more on deporting convicted criminals and asking since they are kept out of Canada, that on reentering firearms owned by law-abiding citizens. **Jerrod Lumbert, President, Responsible Firearms Owners of Alberta, Peace River, Alta.**

Smoky gets in your eyes

Your coverage of Bruce "Smoky" Smith, Canada's last living neighbor of the Victoria Cross, made me laugh and brought a tear to my eye at his passing. ("I was never afraid to shoot, that's what I was paid for," *The Mailweek Interview*, Aug. 15). My grandfather on my dad's side fought in the Second World War. He wouldn't talk about it much until he was close to death. I am sure Smoky will be missed. Hopefully he and God are sharing a few laughs and enjoying a beer or two.

William Topp, Fort McMurray, Alta.

After reading your article and interview, I can see why Smoky Smith was the Victoria Cross. This brave war hero died with them in the Canadian Forces, so, as they were enough to know, Smoky was sharp and knew what to do under duress and fire. He deserves our everlasting respect and gratitude. We still live in the shadow of this war thank you to Smoky, all veterans and current armed forces. **Mark Ferguson, Richmond Hill, Ont.**

No sex please, we're skittish

I just finished reading *Tru* (Bruce's story about Edward Shorter's look at sex through the ages, *Written in the Flesh: A History of Desire*) ("The pleasure principle,"



The desire for "total body sex" is buried deep within our brains, a historian maintains.

Books, Aug. 15). But his description of the primitive human mating habits during medieval times left me really happy to be alive now. With the lies and myths and husbands stinking like goats, it's a wonder we're here at all.

Robert Baskin, Grimsby, Ont.

Could you please tell me if Bruce's story is meant to be a book review or a rather strange pitch of Shorter's work? After reading the article twice, I have no idea whether I should read the book or not. I wonder, in fact, whether Bruce himself read it, rather than flipping through the pages looking for juicy pieces. However, the artwork (book for getting me to read) took up a great deal of space that could have been used for a proper, in-depth look at Shorter's study. **Maggie Hagedorn, Ottawa**

A delivery from God

"I am always sure to take everything we have in our life for granted, but reading Brian McGowan's story about Glenda and Kevin Hickley, the young Leado, Alta., couple who conceived and gave birth after Glenda had a massive stroke, "Miracle Birth," Family, July 25), clearly showed me that I

have nothing to complain about. The Hickleys are a true example of love, courage, dedication and willingness to live a normal life despite unbelievable obstacles. God bless both of them and their three daughters. **Louise Sauer-Nichols, Mississauga, Ont.**

A pregnant mother in her mid-30s considers another baby and we call it a miracle! For shame, Maclean's! What will happen when the fundamens and I question the quality of life that child will receive considering how many other youth in the Edmonton area fall prey to their parents' financial difficulties. **Tyler Pihman, Edmonton**

To me, reading Maclean's is like going up a garage sale. I sift through the pages, finding things that might evoke a distant memory, things that bring a smile and things that might be a little disturbing. In the July 25 issue I found a treasure tucked in your pages: a story of the Hickley family and their 7-lb., 4-ounce delivery from God. Amazing! **Kelley D. Cowan, Strathroy, Ont.**

I am 30 years old, and a fellow stroke survivor. Brian's description of what it is like to be locked inside one's body is extremely accurate and it can be a lifelong sentence that sometimes causes the people you need the most to run in the other direction. Thanks to the Hickleys for sending it out. They are an inspiration. **Heather Winkler, Belleville, Ont.**

MACLEAN'S BEHIND THE SCENES



THE SUNDOG SEASON

"When I was five years old, I wished for the death of another boy, prayed for it, and it happened."

With these words, Maclean's Ottawa Bureau Chief John Geddes (above) introduces the nameless 13-year-old narrator of *The Sundog Season*, his coming-of-age novel about growing up in a remote northern Ontario mining town.

Published in June by Tarrstone Press, *The Sundog Season* is Geddes's first novel and the product of his 2003 Nieman Fellowship at Harvard University.

"Since my late teens I've wanted to try writing a novel but never had the time," he says. "The fellowship—a sabbatical year for mid-career journalists—created the conditions to make it possible."

Geddes wrote the first draft while attending a creative writing seminar given by writer/editor Rose Moss. He devoted three or four hours to writing each weekday afternoon and came home with a completed manuscript.

While *The Sundog Season* isn't autobiographical, Geddes says the setting of West Spirit Lake is closely modelled on his hometown of Cochenour, a community of 800 in the Red Lake district of northwestern Ontario.

Informed by that keen sense of place, *The Sundog Season* follows the narrator as he negotiates the challenges of leaving childhood behind while coping with the mysterious new cop coaching his hockey team.

Despite the critical acclaim with which the novel has been greeted, Geddes has no plans to write fiction full-time. "I can't imagine leaving journalism," he says. "And some of the craft I've developed as a journalist—the lean prose, sense of place and narrative flow—helped me to write *The Sundog Season*."

Nonetheless, he has begun making character and plot notes for another novel. "It will be quite a different story," Geddes says. "For starters, it probably won't be set in Canada." More than that he won't say. Stay tuned.

Help shape what's inside Maclean's by registering as a member of the Maclean's Advisory Panel at www.macleans.com/aps. For further information, call 1-877-333-3333.



Get a whole new view of the **TRUMAN** show on this Special Edition DVD



On DVD
August 23

And don't miss this other
Special Edition DVD.

THE WEEK

SHOOT PLANE Fighter pilots flying alongside seven apparently unconscious co-pilot and two people trying desperately to adjust the controls. That was near the end of a hellish 23-minute descent as the Helios Airways Boeing 737 passenger jet was about to crash into a hill near Athens and kill all 121 on board. The plane had apparently lost cabin pressure and oxygen while it was cruising at 34,000 feet and continued its journey on autopilot, similar to the bizarre incident involving U.S. pilot Payne Brown on years ago in private jet. The co-pilot said later that many on board were asleep, though perhaps unconscious, when the crash occurred.

It was not a good week for aircraft: A Colombian charter carrying vacationers home to Miami suffered engine failure and crashed in Venezuela, killing all 164 on board. A Spanish helicopter crashed in high winds in Afghanistan, killing 17 people. And a Canadian fighter jet went down on a training mission in northern Quebec as the pilot ejected.

BOMBING After a lull of a few days, three car bombs exploded in quick succession around a crowded Baghdad bus terminal, killing at least 43 people and wounding scores more. An even more coordinated attack, however, rocked Iraq's capital, but a ceasefire was declared. Hundreds of small bombs—more than 500, some reports said—were set off in a simulta-

neous attack across the country. A radical group that wants to turn Baghdad into an Islamic state is being blamed.

Meanwhile, Canadian soldiers in their new base in Kandahar were investigating a roadside bomb that killed one police recruit and injured dozens. With Afghan doctors set for September, renewed violence is expected in the former Taliban stronghold.



RUSH TO KILL Leaked investigative reports suggest London's police overreacted and may have colored their accounts when they killed Juan Carlos de Meneses (left), the 37-year-old Brazilian electrician masquerading for a suicide bomber on July 22. The new reports said de Meneses was already being restrained by a surveillance officer when he was shot three times, twice in the head. Also, that he was not wearing a padded jacket and had not handled a banner at the Underground station, as initial reports said. The de Meneses family wants a public inquiry.

WAR GAMES In a show of military might that has the potential to change the world's balance of power, China and Russia engaged in their first war games together, a supposedly serious exercise that involved about 30,000 troops, submarine exercises and

crisis missile launches. Some analysts saw the deployment as the first step in creating a NATO-like military alliance in the Far East.

EARTHQUAKE A powerful earthquake measuring 7.2 hit northern Japan, causing skyscrapers to sway for up to two minutes in Tokyo and triggering a small tsunami. No deaths were reported but tens of thousands were without power or transportation.

VIOLAX A Texas jury found the once popular penicillin Vioxx was responsible for the death of a 59-year-old Mid-Missouri manager and marathon runner in 2006. It awarded his widow more than \$82.50 million, mostly in punitive damages. This was the first in a series of personal injury suits against Vioxx, which was pulled voluntarily from the market last fall after a study said it contributed to heart disease. Merck & Co. said it will appeal the verdict because the type of heart condition that caused the man's death has never been linked to the medication.

DOCTORS The Canadian Medical Association stepped away from its long-standing support for medicare as delegates, meeting in Edmonton, voted in favor of generic health insurance, at least for special circumstances when not others have been excessive. Previously, the CMA also rejected a resolution that wanted to ban the creation of a parallel, private health system.

SOFT WOOD Ottawa cancelled planned talks with the U.S. and was considering retaliatory trade action in the wake of Washington's refusal to make trade by final NAFTA ruling on the long-running lumber dispute that went Canada's way. However, sanctions to try to recoup some of the \$3 billion in softwood duties that the U.S. has collected will have to wait for a World Trade Organization ruling, not expected before 2008.

PRIVACY Ottawa will introduce legislation this fall to allow police and security agencies, with a judicial warrant, to tap cell-phone calls and monitor Internet activities, including online pseudonyms. The new power would require Internet service providers to turn over client records directly to police and could allow law enforcement to quickly investigate relatively minor offenses such as downloading music or movies.

Acid Reflux.

Symptom relief does not always mean damage-free.

Abrasions of the esophagus can persist even after symptoms have been relieved.

Protect yourself. Learn more.

Call 1-877-973-3589

Sponsored by a research-based pharmaceutical company.

BY JAM MURPHY

We now go to an art deco doorknob from Antiques Roadshow for the CBC News—



Mansbridge on the Record



CHANGING THE GAME

Hockey is trying to improve. It's time for politicians to get the message as well.

HOW THAT THEY'VE finished turning up the inevitable cash, those who deliver the NHL will have to soon address the changes that may actually make a difference in how the game is perceived. There are all sorts of rule changes coming, designed to make the game faster, cleaner and more exciting. Here's the one I like: they're going to make the net larger. Bigger, not really, but they are going to make goalies' pads smaller, which will, as a result, make more of the net available for those trying to fire a puck into it. Hands up if you feel that's a good thing.

My hand is in the air, if for no other reason than I'd like to see the idea made to smaller rule changes in other sports, especially ones I love to watch. Like golf. The old saying "Time for show, put for dough" underlines the fact that most of coverage golfers seek up at least one-third of every stroke putting, just as they hang the ball into a 45-degree hole. So for better scoring in golf, the solution is simple: make the hole larger.

Lower the net in tennis? Make the ball smaller in basketball? Okay, I appreciate that some rule changes could be dangerous to the integrity of a game, but others could make things more exciting, and may even deliver a better product, which is certainly what professional hockey is hoping for. Hockey is used to be Canada's favourite pastime, and the new look that will soon hit the ice may ensure that remains the case.

Some think our second-innovation pastime is politics, and an electoral edition is due to start up again after what has been a much-needed summer break.

The political players quite likely have similar aims—clean up the game, and get people interested in an activity that attracted nothing but disdain just months ago. Maybe there's room for change in this game, too. If my mail comes for something, Canadians probably wouldn't be too shy about modifying the way politics is played. Here are two convenient concerns that cross my desk.

1. "Answer the questions." This one is directed at those politicians who, many feel, will do anything to avoid giving a single answer to a direct query issued, many give responses spoon-fed to them by staffers, and as a result they have a kind of blank look on their faces as they repeat exactly what it was they were told to say. This is what's called "message track," and all sides are guilty here—members are the most obvious, as witnessed by the daily show that is *Question Period*, but senior opposition members often look as different when they're challenged on their own policies.

2. "Talk about what we talk about." The frustration here is on the part of those who watch the action in Ottawa, media included, and wonder why anyone would be so stupid as to do anything to inhibit the most important piece of oil continues to climb, I've often heard from Canadians wondering why politicians seem to ignore the issue, focusing attention upon that only Ottawa finds fascinating.

Some interesting ideas, but then, as last for me, so is the idea of enlarging the golf hole. Should we hold our breath for changes? That hole may well be one of sport's most durable traditions when a randomly picked hole came to be used in 1828, it just happened to be 4½ inches in diameter. The size has never changed. Sound like politics? **B**

Peter Mansbridge is Chief Correspondent of CBC Television News and anchor of *The National*. His comments reflect his own views.

Passages

DIED Robert Bonner, a savvy lawyer who became B.C.'s longest-serving attorney general (1952-1968) and premier B.C.A.C. Bonner's right-hand man, died of lung cancer in Vancouver at 84. Bonner probably could have succeeded Bonner as second premier, but he went on to head rather than MacMillan Bloedel and later B.C. Hydro.

HONOURED He is Canada's premier pianist, virtuoso and suffering the after-effects of stroke. But as Bruce Peterson turned 80, he was fazed at a quiet story in downtown Toronto.



—**dr. Diana Krall** flew in to play *Happy Birthday Canada* at the most difficult occasion with a steep, making Peterson the only living Canadian to be so honoured.

APOLOGIZED The first person involved in the sponsorship scandal, Quebecer and Paul Coffa, 43, took out a mortgage on his home, borrowed money from friends and finally repaid Ottawa \$1 million to settle its civil suit against him. Before he was released, Coffa asked the court not to send him to jail for fraud. He is to be sentenced on Sept. 19.

ALLING And smoking symbol Heather Crowe, the first Canadian awarded world's compensation for lung cancer caused by second-hand smoke, appears to be losing her battle with the disease. Crowe, 60, a non-smoker and former waitress, was in an Ottawa hospital. The cancer had spread to her liver.



MURDERED After 10 years in Canada, he returned to his native Iraq earlier this year to find a wife and start a business. Zaid Mawardi, 33, was shot dead and dumped in a Baghdad ditch by kidnappers who matched him from his new home on July 18. His Toronto-area family said they had been prepared to pay a \$250,000 ransom.

Watch jaws drop to the floor.



Redo any room without breaking a sweat.

Trust us to make your home sizzle.



You can. With quality service on backside. It's the power of The Home Depot. Our network of licensed, insured, and accredited professionals are willing to provide your next kitchen cabinet, carpet, hardware or tile job. Save time and money. Our project coordinators will ensure that your entire project is completed quickly and efficiently. And through our **in-Home Decorating Service**, a qualified Home Depot design consultant will help you transform any room in your home. **You can do it. We can help.**

For installation you free. Call 1-800-77-THEHOME or visit your local Home Depot for more information.

TOO LATE NOW

Jean's appointment raised complex questions that deserved to be talked about

BEFORE MICHAËLE JEAN became the most controversial choice for governor general in living memory—before it became necessary for Paul Martin's helpers to insist on the caveat that Jean was her selection—the first story the Prime Minister's Office told about her selection was one of *untouchable* selection.

On Aug. 4 Martin introduced Jean, a successful and extraordinarily poised Radio-Canada broadcaster who was born in Haiti, at a news conference in Ottawa. Jean's husband,

Jean-Daniel Lafond, a documentary filmmaker, attended the little ceremony with their adopted daughter, Marie-Iden.

Two days later the National Post carried an interview with Hélène Scherrer, Martin's principal secretary. She said Martin wasted no time deciding the two-mpg pool should go to Jean. "I said, 'Yes, I know who the next G-O-G is going to be,'" Scherrer said. "And I just pronounced the name and he jumped on it right away. He said, 'Yes, go and see her.'" That was on a Friday in June. On Monday Martin inquired about Jean. "I didn't think you were that serious on Friday and that it was such a," Scherrer told the National Post. "And he said, 'Yes, I want you to see her.'"

There would be weeks of preparatory labour between those June meetings and the Aug. 4 announcement that Martin was designating Jean as the Queen's representative in Canada. But when everything started to speed sideways a few days after Martin introduced Jean to the Canadian people, it was hard to find evidence that the intervening time had taught the PMO any more about style choice than Martin knew when he acted on the idea of making her governor general.

The first hint of trouble came from Cécile Tremblay, a film critic at *Le Devoir*. In an opinion piece the day after Jean's appointment was announced, Tremblay warmly welcomed the choice. Jean was just what the doctor ordered to "bring a new sense of integrity to a government that's run out of breath," she wrote. But Tremblay also would not bow Jean and her husband Lafond, "contaminated by corruption and of their word, so attached to Quebec's interests, can manage

the mischief where the Crown resides."

Lafond's Elms have been about the great novels of the Quebec independence movement, like Pierre Perrault and Jacques Gagnon, founders of the *Front de libération du Québec*. "Hard to imagine [Lafond] as a prime consort holding his soap," Tremblay wrote. "He likes to talk so much, and he does it so well." As for

APPARENTLY
any Montrealeer, after a morning stroll, might take it into his head to vote "Oui" instead of "Non"

Michèle Jean, "Her responsibilities are just a great. Perhaps too great for the role that awaits her."

Tremblay's analysis was largely uncontroverted. The same can hardly be said for the next volley, which was fired on Aug. 6 from an obscure source. *Le Québécois*, a hard-core separatist pamphlet published five years a year, just normally in the centre of Quebec's political debate. So when its editors took exception to Jean's appointment, they made a special effort to reach a broader audience, going their attack on the Internet and converting it to several journals in larger print and broadcast outlets.

The article, written by novelist René Boivin, called Lafond "a pure independentist." He didn't bring around all his two-hundred-year-old and his pure nationalist. The reference was to Lafond's 1994 docu-

mentary *Le Tabernacle solitaire* (Liberty Bop), which featured a reunion of former FLQ members. Boivin wrote further still Lafond's bookies had been built by Jacques Rose, the converted FLQ terrorist, complete with a false bottom to hide weapons.

Why reveal all this? Boivin wrote was frank he wanted to provoke a backlash against Jean in English Canada that would give new fuel to Quebec's separatist movement. "The hatred of our liberty that will be revealed" by an apogee against Jean's nomination "my office, as much as any March Lolo, to band us in the same destiny—the Quebec of the secular movement."

Whatever their merits, Lafond's films are not widely distributed. By the time reports finally got their hands on *Le Tabernacle solitaire* or the companion book Lafond published after the film was released, *Le Québécois* had dropped another bombshell: La Martin sign, Lafond's film about the Martinique author Aimé Césaire, contained scenes shot at a Montreal bar in which Jean posed a series of faces with prominent Quebec separatists.

Faced with more trouble than it could possibly have expected, the PMO produced an ever-changing narrative. "What is taking place here is nothing more complicated than a smear campaign by headline specialists whose aim is Jean's appointment as a threat," Scott Reid, Martin's communications director, told the Canadian Press soon after *Le Québécois* fired its first volley (subsequent stories, Reid argued, that, far from benefiting from Martin's quick reaction, Jean had been the object of close scrutiny. "There is a negative process," he told the *Globe and Mail*, "and when the Prime Minister says that he is satisfied and that we can all be satisfied that Madame Jean and Mr. Lafond are committed Canadians, we have good reasons to believe the Prime Minister."

But how rigorous was the process? In *CarWeek* News, Reid said "We have an intention about asking the future governor



general, or her husband, about their new acquaintances or who they might have had dinner with 15 or 20 years ago." Indeed, right up until Jean pledged her allegiance to Canada, the PMO was arguing in the strongest terms against such a pledge. "We are not going to disgrace either

of these people or their office by asking them to turn out their underwear drawer and justify their allegiance to Queen and country," Reid told the *Globe*. In fact, one anonymous PMO source told a reporter the reason Jean would not be asked to clarify her national loyalty was because "we do

One wonders what the future GG makes of her husband's films

not live in Stalinist Russia."

But by the time another week of hell had gone by, critics that had seemed hounding suddenly looked pretty good. In a three-paragraph column, Jean wrote that she and Lafond were "proud to be Canadians and that we have the greatest respect for the institutions of our country. We are fully committed to Canada. I would not have accepted this position otherwise."

And that, it would appear, was that. By the end of the week a good deal of steam had gone out of the Michaëlle Jean controversy. If the likes of Reid Boivin seemed her erstwhile out of Ottawa, then a lot of Canadians were disinclined to co-operate. It seemed hard to imagine anyone taking a job at the Queen's representative unless she believed in the whole Canadian idea. Many people aren't inclined in pinning her husband's work, however problematic, on Jean. And however brief her statement, however correct by events, it seemed clear enough. Plead to be Canadian. Fully committed to Canada.

All that was left was assurance that this controversy, based either on publicly available documents, could have reached a government that had had a lot of time to prepare and badly needs a political victory. In two weeks of frantic improvisation, Martin's office argued many times that Lafond's work was taken out of context. Yet Martin's staff never turned Lafond's films to offer greater understanding, nor

quoted any part of Lafond's films that would have produced a more balanced portrait. Perhaps that's because there's nothing more balanced to quote.

Le Tabernacle solitaire is a long meditation on the history of the FLQ in which some of its founding members debate their methods,

arguing in length about the wisdom of armed intervention as a tool for achieving independence. Here and there, Laford expresses doubt about whether Quebec will become a country at all. But at no point does he express any doubt about whether it should. In the movie's companion book, Laford writes that Pierre Vallières' *manifesto, Les Nègres blancs d'Amérique* (*White Niggers of America*) "contributed to my discovery of the profound realities and aspirations of Quebec" as an immigrant from France.

He writes that Francis Simard, who co-wrote the script and who, more than 20 years earlier, belonged to the FLQ cell that murdered Pierre Laporte, was a far friend. "Our complicity was immediate, as though we had long shared the secret reason for his exile, the profound scar history had left in him and the great silence enshrouding the moment of violent collision between the political and the inhuman that led him, one day, to decide that a man must die."

He writes that he wanted to get Vallières and Charles Gagnon, estranged founders of the FLQ, back together because he "imagined that they had not dropped their arms and joined the ranks of the resigned." This came out to be a constant theme in Laford's work: the refusal to abandon revolutionary spirit through "compromise" and "resignation." He quotes with approval these lines from Vallières: "When I agree to compromise I will have done my ideal in my spirit and my heart. For my future, I will be good only for the cemetery."

The film's closing credits listed the documentary's various "players" as though they were actors in a Victorian stage drama. In Laford's film, he labels Vallières "buccaneer," one who has not surrendered. Francis Simard is "just plain innocent," equally unwilling to surrender.

In an fascinating section of the book, Laford candidly offers his readers a lesson in getting money from a federal agency for a film about separatists. He publishes the proposal, or "scenario," for *La liberté en collier*. Of necessity, he says, a cinema "all the more rigorous which serves as a dialogue" with National Film Board decision-makers. At such, "it has more to do with compromise than with provocation," he says.

"Of course, nobody is fooled," Laford continues. "Everybody knows the scenario will be blown up in the course of making the film."

It makes sense that *La Liberté en collier*, as a film explicitly about revolutionary politics in Quebec, would draw most of its visual imagery from people trying to figure out what makes Laford tick. *La Manifeste* never seems, at first glance, more obscure a portrait of André Gauthier, a writer and anti-colonialist revolutionary from Martinique. Seen in a sense it's all the more striking that it made sense to Laford, who filmed this portrait, to bring his subject to Montreal in 1991 to film a few rounds of drinks at the much-loved St. Denis Street watering hole, *Quoi des Brunes*.



Around the table, Haitian-Quebecois writers Dany Laferrière and Serge Legrand, Michèle Jean, and quite a brace of Bilingual separatist activists, including Valières, the poet and Parti Québécois politician Girard Godin, André Forcier, former vice-president of the RN, a precursor to the PQ, and poet Paul Chamberland (Vehaps Mardouche Richier was busy that day).

One dream of PQMO again during that week's uproar was that when we see the quote inscribed "to independence" "to independence" the reference is to Martinique's independence, not Quebec's. But in the companion book to his film, Laford says precisely the contrary. "Then the question of independence arises," he writes. "That

of Quebec of course, of Martinique, and the lesson we can take from Haiti's."

The conversation took a moment that was not discussed during any of last week's controversy. Girard Godin has the floor. "What characterizes a Quebecoisist is persistence. One must be present and patient; will yield results because sooner or later, time will have gone by. The result is that Quebecers are much more ready for action today than they were during the 20 years leading up to the 1980 referendum. Which is why, the situation having changed, I'm going back to the timeline of sovereignty of my country."

side it into his head to vote "Oui" instead of "Non." What of it?

In a way this analysis shows a lack of respect for Laford's work as filmmaker. Making an NFB documentary takes a lot of time. Preparing the companion book, two efforts of years later, takes a lot of time. Making two films and two books with overlapping cuts and themes suggests a consistency of applied analysis that a body of minor or critical, should simply deserve. The *Blackboard* is that Laford meant what he said, again and again in several venues over several years. Which makes the bulk of Jean's note

would be entirely confirming if there were not a few discouraging precedents. For more than a decade now, dozens of committed separatists at a time have sat in Ottawa, collecting Maple Leaf psychiques and contributing to federal programs while they debate federal legislation. They're called the Blue Quilbois.

The film's borders sound as Brian Mahoney's secretary of state, Lucien Bouchard was the minister in charge of the Canadian Citizenship Act, official language policy and the Canada Day ceremonies in Parliament Hill. When reporters asked about his controversial sovereignty leanings, Bouchard replied: "I am a Canadian. Who can doubt it? I am very proud to be a Canadian."

Bouchard's colleague Monique Bégin was at the federal cabinet table for as long as Brian Mahoney was prime minister. In 1996, protesting against the Canadian government's Supreme Court reference on secession, Bégin announced that she had "never been a federalist." Surely it would be good news if we could find this sort of surprise in the future.

It is true that nationalism in Quebec is a matter of degree and that those with firm opinions have feelings about their province—or their nation, if you prefer—that are hard for anglophone or other provinces to understand. It is normal that national affiliation in such an environment be subject to change. But it's usually not true that most Quebecers have made a series of admissions about the most radical and sometimes violent members of the separatist movement. It is possible to argue that this past is irrelevant to Michèle Jean's future. But there are complex questions and they—we—deserve a complex discussion.

As the credits roll at the end of Laford's *La Liberté en collier*, the Quebecois singer Pierre Larocque sings the song that gave the film its title. *Chère à la terre de mon pays*, he sings. *La liberté, pauvre, le mouvement*. This is the reason glory came. Explain *l'idée*. All that remains is what's written. ☐



The others raise their own glasses for this toast, Laford writes. Bilingual Jean missed herself from the table, or, greatly divided her colleagues that if anyone can tell the difference between colonial Martinique and Canada, it's her, her husband engaged to take notes.

In some weeks later work was far too busy to write off the Laford film, and Jean's cameo at *Quoi des Brunes*, an occasion of the ideological flexibility that is as fundamental a part of life in Montreal as a sunny disregard for traffic signals. Everyone in Montreal finds herself at a table full of sovereignty (now and then, according to this analysis. Anyone might, Laford wrote, at a polling station after a morning stroll. This argument is rather conflicting. It

Maclean's 100 YEARS in a Flash CONTEST

Maclean's has been interpreting Canada for a century. Get creative and give us your own interpretation of 100 years!

Take the concept of "100 years" and bring it to life through flash animation.

Your work will be seen and judged by design professionals and the rest of Canada.

WIN 1 of 4 The latest version of Macromedia Studio Value: US\$999 each

So fire up your imagination, talent and computer and show us what you've got.

Enter online at www.macleans.ca/100years

NEW Deadline!
September 9, 2005

Complete contest rules and regulations and submission info is available online at www.macleans.ca/100years. Contest ends on October 10, 2005. See age eligibility restrictions.

macromedia

MACLEAN'S 100

ROGERS



COVENANT HOUSE MORGUARD celebrity golf classic

MONDAY, AUGUST 29, 2005 • GLENCAIRN GOLF CLUB, MILTON



COVENANT HOUSE

"All proceeds go to help
homeless kids"

To register visit:
covenanthouse.ca/golf

Opinion | BY MARK STARGOWICZ



WHAT'S ON THE LINE

Entrenchment and Ideology, says a veteran, are risking the CBC's future

I DIDN'T KNOW whether to laugh or cry. On one side of Toronto's Front Street, hundreds of CBC employees, including me, marching in front of the Broadview Centre with signs reading "Looked Out?" On the other side, about an equal number of unionizing strangers in front of the Convention Centre dressed wearing signs like, "We Love You Sam." Canadian Idol host waiting for comedian Scott Brown right across from NewsWorld employees waiting for Peter Marshall.

The bizarre image of Glenn Gould in front of the CBC seemed to be starting at the historic Idol worshippers unconsciously. Someone had put a "Defunct Public Broadcasting" sign around the neck. "It's got to be symbolic of something," a CBC employee said at our parking lot entrance from across the street. "You just not sure what."

It did have the unsettling quality of a hit list sign, and, being public broadcasting employees, we instantly turned into a panel discussion as we walked in the hazy rain. Opinion ranged from "It's a sign of what the management wants to turn the CBC into" to "I wouldn't mind their ratings."

For scores of the CBC on the line, it was their first look-out strike—it was certainly new—and, I suspect, Glenn Gould's too. I've been in the CBC as long that I actually knew him. We had to virtually climb over him as he sat on a bench on the floor space of the radio building. "Was he staff or contract?" someone asked anxiously. I said I couldn't remember. "Probably contract."

The CBC has looked over the 3,500 members of the Canadian Media Guild, and, with the exception of New Brunswick and Quebec, all CBC locations outside Ottawa and Toronto are closed. The English radio and television networks are being operated by management staff, radio's morning shows and news, TV is running *60 Minutes* in The National time slot carrying cricket from South Africa. The look-out started in mid-afternoon on Monday, after 15 months of negotiations both sides have described as



Entrenched into CBC stations is how a picket line from across the street.

fraternal. Violence on both sides from a standoff that will last well into October, if not later.

There could be the beginning of the biggest single industrial explosion in the arts and journalism in Canadian history. Make no mistake, a momentous event is unfolding. I cannot think of any other media layoff or strike that equals its scale in numbers, even the legendary 1958 producers' strike in Montreal. Never in CBC history has all of the talent on the English network been in one union. Beyond the most visible part of the spectrum—the great foreign correspondents like Joe Schlesinger, hosts like Mary Lou Fitzpatrick, co-hosts Don Cherry and Ron MacLean, and many of the finest cameramen in the country—are writers, artists, designers, documentary editors and directors, new media specialists, music and drama recording engineers and producers.

The ripple effect in the arts is potentially staggering. In radio alone, it means no recording and transmission of concerts, in publishing it means no reviewing and dusting of books, as authors on the air, no plays. In television, the cessation of production will, over time, extend well beyond

the CBC employees into independent stations, competitors, writers, actors and performers. In journalism generally, across the shroud of all CBC local and regional news, and the sudden disappearance of half the national political and social coverage on the streets.

Beneath the levity on the picket line, there is a context of homelessness. How did it come to this? I walked for a while with an old colleague from *As It Happens* days, radio producer Steve Wadsworth, now a celebrated documentarian, biographer of George Orwell, most with one of Canada's leading chamber choirs. The garden of man, he was fondly told. "That is speaking! How could they let this happen?"

While Wadsworth was furious with senior management, even Salomon, revealed and co-host of CBC News Sunday, disappointed of both sides. "This standoff is a failure, a terrible failure by the CBC and by the union."

For my part, you should know that I'm an insured party to the dispute, since I'm a member of the union, locked out with all the other employees. Like Wadsworth and Salomon, though, I'm sufficiently long in the

month as a journalist to be curious about something other side's claims unentirely. I'm writing this not to belabor contract points—which are so tedious they could tie up a dozen theologies—but because I think, in the words of William, "Something very intimate and precious is being broken." Why is it happening?

Historically, one reason is because, for the first time, there is a single bargaining unit, and single negotiation. Both sides, labour and management, wanted the freedom of a patchwork of contracts with different unions, that was supposed to bring order to the marketplace. Instead, it became a Dodge City standoff. This riot continues well into the workplace for every future one, so both sides are trying to solve differing battle. The CBC chief negotiator, speaking about one contentious issue, said, "This is the hill we will die on." This was not helpful, and the result being chief negotiator as the last person before the lockout, but it reveals the degree of entrenchment.

Second, the battle has become ideological. I've told one of the mediators left the process in the end saying something like this to both sides: "You can waste money, working conditions, almost anything. But when you make it ideological, you're doomed."

That ideological battle is over how much programming is produced by CBC's full-time employees versus short-term contract staff, or by contracting out programs and services.

The CBC says that in a changing technological environment and shifting marketplace, it needs considerably more flexibility to acquire and release talent and services if a program is cancelled, for example, the CBC does not want to be bound to find other assignments for the staff, a process that failed to newer, younger staff being "bumped" by ones with more seniority. It also needs to deal unproductive staffers.

The gold says the CBC's already five in one short-term contract employees and already contractors all on drama, variety and comedy and is just trying to make the union and have a disposable workforce without security and benefits. It goes on to note in the past when contracts expired, for example, new hires for the first or four months that programs like *Monty Python's Flying Circus* were off the air or in repeat cycle.

It's not a fivefold battle, and not that it is



Peter Marshall (right) with CBC chief negotiator Arnold Amherst

a new one. We can all tell old horse stories to support either side of the current debate. I can remember when the first portable radio cassette recorders came on the market in the seventies and revolutionized radio. The radio technicians' union tried to limit the use of this technology and worried all

CBC'S chief negotiator, speaking of the issue of contracting out, said, 'This is the hill we will die on'

about according to be conducted by a sound engineer—which meant we'd have had to send an engineer to every town where to carry a machine that weighed five pounds and cost \$300.

I also remember CBC hired Art Haggard and The Chieftains in the Morning program and researchers on 13 week contracts that for years were renewed only at the last minute, so the someone could be at the CBC for five years and have no benefits,

nothing towards a pension, no security and no disability in case of major illness.

Flexibility (which the specific projects is important, as is a core creative mix). Canada's People's History was produced by a core of staff, producers and editors who developed it and fought for it, but also brought in many independent producers and short-term staff, who left after the project was completed. Other news programs offer approaches. All done in the CBC, like *Dalton's* and *This is Wonderland*, is already concerned out to independent, as is all variety and comedy. On the other hand, that's not the way to run a news department or the CBC news.

Any creative institution needs the fresh brains of new people and new ideas, and must resist artistic atrophy. But it also needs core strength. Take the analogy of a great hockey team. You don't play against the New York Rangers next Thursday by going through a *Real Gone* and trying to find who ever goalie or forward happens to be available that day. You have a firm team, you want to people, you balance grinders and Greyskys, you create a culture of excellence. A great dance company, orchestral company, or a great newspaper, are built the same way.

This dilemma is as old as the hills in the CBC, in all the arts. The creative process is messy and makes cooperation. There is no one-size-fits-all ideological solution to this, because the technology and the culture are ever-changing. We've lived with this balance, adjusted it, and many of us have fought on different sides of it at different times.

But, in a quarter of a century of television news, we never raise this issue, never asked breaking the contractors it, never. At the moment, there are no negotiations and no one is willing, except colleagues trying to raise the ghost. I just got an email from one of the mid-level managers inside "Thinking of you, Maryse." We've worried the planets."

Mark Starmack is a senior executive producer of the CBC Documentary Unit.

Cheerios Heart&Stroke Mother Daughter Walk

Canada comes together for the women in your life.



Finding answers. For life.

Join us Sunday, Sept 25, 2005

Join your friends and family for one special day when communities across Canada come together to take important steps against heart disease and stroke, the leading cause of death among women.

Register at heartandstroke.ca/walk

1-888-HSF-INFO

Cheerios

Desjardins
Financial Security

Pfizer
Medication

chatale

Discovery
Health

FRANK IN FRONT

Ignatieff? Rae? Not a hope. The real money's on McKenna for next Liberal leader.

ASK A PROMINENT Liberal about who might be the party's next leader and the first response is a deep, empowered sigh, combined with head-eye-rolling and head-shaking. After the long years of the Chrétien-Martin wars, can't we leave it alone? And, anyway, given Stephen Harper's well-known golfing proclivities, isn't the identity of the next Tory leader that should be the subject of speculation? But with those complaints out of the way—and with a firm understanding that this is all off the record, right?—leadership hand-picking is a sport that's never out of season. Liberal MP/strategist/natural talk-show host

it during the workday when their caucus meets for a summer session in flightless this week, but it's bound to come up after hours. What's intriguing is that the same insiders who say there is no substantive leadership race also agree there is a front-runner—Frank McKenna, Canada's ambassador to the United States.

Yet McKenna has not attracted the most leadership attention in the media recently. Pundits and players have been hyperconcentrating on more novel potential candidates. First came a wave of chatter about the prospect of Michael Ignatieff, the media star Harvard University professor, coming home to win over the party in a Pierre Trudeau-like philosophical kind. Next, attention shifted to the arguably

BOB RAE "has no resonance among Liberal barbecue-goers," says one party strategist, and Ignatieff lacks experience

even stronger scenario of Bob Rae, the former NDP premier of Ontario, searching gossamer eyes for a return to politics and a bid to become the next federal Liberal to take up residency in 24 Sussex Drive. But while Ignatieff and Rae each have their share of Goff fans, neither can scratch McKenna's mainstream credibility. "I'd be very surprised if he didn't have the edge," insists Martin Roy, who also views McKenna as the man to beat.

McKenna represents a package that makes some political strategists go weak at the knees. Still, boyish at 57, he is a decade younger than Paul Martin. As New Brunswick's pre-business premier from 1987 to 1997, he established a far higher national profile than most leaders of small provinces. His extensive network includes the likes of

Liberal Party of Canada national director Steve McKenna, who was McKenna's executive assistant from 1988 to 1996. He has many well-placed bosses among Liberal MPs and senators. "I'm a Frank McKenna Liberal," declares New Brunswick MP Andy Sawyer, the Liberal caucus chair. "I think he'd make a great, great prime minister." But Sawyer, who acts as the main liaison between the current Prime Minister and his MPs, hastens to add, "I don't think Frank's actively pursuing it."

Of course not. Rae's serving ambassador to be oughtn't to be caught engaging in anything that smacks of leadership jockeying would be a damaging overstatement. McKenna is far too experienced a political operator to risk it. The beauty of his

current post is the way it has allowed him to launch his image while quietly doing his job. Rarely has a Canadian diplomat commanded so much positive media attention. McKenna has been front-and-centre in talking on any American who suggests that Canada is soft on terror, firing back at everyone from New York Times editorial writers to CNN personalities. Each who gets another round of glowing press in Canada. He has also cutted much of the lead for Ottawa on two-terrors. First, from a road now down to salt-water lumber, it's a no-loss role, even if McKenna doesn't succeed, but it's away with the home crowd as a seasoned Canadian bashing the Big Bad Americans.

In fact, McKenna is hardly a rank outsider in Washington. Before being appointed



ambassador, he was on the Canadian advisory board of the Oxyde Group, a Washington, D.C.-based investment firm with links to former U.S. president George H.W. Bush. When that firm became an issue after he was named Canada's representative in Washington early this year, McKenna downplayed them. "I have a relationship with a few members of the Bush family," he said. "But it's not a very tight, strong relationship."

What leadership does? McKenna, a boyish 57, is a decade younger than Paul Martin.

Still, any connection to the Bush clan is nothing and in today's Republican-dominated Washington. Add to that McKenna's track record, back in the late 1990s, as a strong proponent of the Canada-U.S. free trade deal, and his business-friendly, but not business-politics as New Brunswick premier,

and more left-of-centre Liberals might begin to get jittery. "Clearly, he's on the right wing of the party," says York University political science professor Robert MacDermid.

But it is McKenna's personal appeal, not his ideological stance, that has many Liberals reeling him above potential leadership rivals. Rae is respected by the party's diehards, who know him well. Martin trusts him enough to have appointed him to advise

the government on whether or not they should be wary of the 1985 Air India bombings. But while McKenna's reputation from provincial politics is strong, Rae's is dubious. After winning the 1990 Ontario election, his popularity plummeted during tough economic times, and his NDP government was swept from power in 1995 by Mike Harris's Tories. And this summer's speculative stir about Rae turning federal Gre didn't translate into rank-and-file enthusiasm. "Bob has no resonance among Liberal barbecue goers," said one party strategist.

Ignatieff comes with no political baggage—but also no experience. At 55, the Harvard human rights professor is Canada's most famous corporate public intellectual, both as an author and a broadcaster. He delivered a widely noted speech to a Liberal policy convention in March, sparking speculation that he is pondering a return to Toronto, after spending most of his adult life in Britain and the U.S., as try to become an MP and then succeed Martin. Friends say he is spending this summer making his options in France. But the prevailing view is that, after decades abroad, he would face a steep up-hill climb.

Some of those banking for a thought: Liberal to back have turned about Social Development Minister Kim Dyckin, making a bid. He's a household name as a former hockey player, and respected by Martin's crew—but not exactly a scorching public performer. "Charmour and competence," said one veteran Liberal opinion-maker, making the case for Dyckin, "are sometimes more important than dynamism."

A rare thought, but not entirely unwelcome. Overall, the arguments for Ignatieff, Rae and Dyckin, along with other long shots, take their toll on such speculation. But none of the more obvious bogeys, notably Chrétien or cabinet heavyweight John Manley, have been seriously seen as real bets. Only McKenna, at this early point, combines straightforward political experience with next steps. Whether that can be sustained is another question. Martin's priorities in election early in 2006. If the loss, the race to replace him will begin immediately. The war, but U.S. ambassador will be able to spend a few more years in Washington, before coming home to start organizing for real. For now, is the race that nobody's running, McKenna holds comfortably ahead.

'GIVE US A CHANCE'

After two close presidential elections, both parties are trying to broaden the tent

KEN MEHLMAN ran the national campaign that edged George W. Bush back into the White House in November. In January, he became chairman of the Republican National Committee. He could have spent the summer gloating. Instead, he has embarked on what some might consider the political equivalent of Bushy's head into a brick wall. Mehlman has been travelling the country courting African-Americans—who voted almost 90 per cent for Democrats in the last election. "Give us a chance," he has implored no fewer than 17 black audiences this year, "and we'll give you a choice."

Howard Dean, the failed presidential contender, is on a similarly agonistic quest. In his new job as chairman of the Democratic National Committee, the former Vermont governor is venturing into the heavily Republican South, learning to speak the traditionally Republican dialect of "yikes." It all comes down to the fact that, after two close presidential elections, both parties have concluded that "mobilizing the base"—getting traditional supporters to the polls on election day—is not enough. But how to broaden the tent?

Berkeley's color-coded map of the November's results in her Washington office, Tina Wolf quantifies the challenge and the opportunity. Bush captured 11 per cent of black votes in 2004, up from eight per cent in 2000. But in several key battleground states, he broke into higher double digits. In crucial Ohio, which sealed his victory by just over 500,000 votes, he had 16 per cent of African-Americans. "I have not won those African-American votes, we would not have won Ohio," says Wolf, who is black and works as Mehlman's director of "outreach communications." The thirty-seven-year-old former Democratic personality Mehlman's hope: "When I grew up, I thought that's what black folks did," she says of joining the Democrats as a modest law professor by a Republican governor's welfare reform policies in Michigan, she notes her parties. The GOP better represent her values of "self responsibility," as the granddaughter of a



Bush and his Republican have been busily trying to make inroads among black voters

single woman who raised five children while refusing welfare, says Wolf.

Wolf's mother became a Republican after her pastor did, she adds, underscoring how black churches are a natural platform for Mehlman's campaign. There he promotes Bush's "faith based initiative," which allows religious groups that deliver social services access to government funds. "It always amazes me to hear liberals saying that faith should have a place in the public square," he said in

a speech to the National Association of Black Journalists earlier this month in Atlanta, noting that Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. led the civil rights movement as head of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

But Mehlman has other policies to promote, including Bush's commitment to tripling American aid to Africa. "It's a pleasure to say, given that as a confidence back in 2000 he indicated that Africa did not have any strategic importance to the U.S.," says Leonard Robinson, president of the National Summit on Africa and one of several Africa activists invited to a private meeting with the President last month. "I don't think it's amoral and immoral." Nor is the fact that Bush has completed the most ethnically diverse cabinet in American history. Then there are the low-profile but precisely targeted Republican initiatives in Congress, such as bills aimed at solving the problems of sickle cell anemia and autism among blacks.

The Republican project is more than

Most people find it hard to talk about abuse and addiction.

Happily, this talk-show host is the exception.

Here's a story with a happy ending. And a horrific beginning. Raped at 8 years old, an alcoholic by the age of 15, Dan could barely function. His family was devastated by sudden deaths and suicide. Drawing upon hidden reserves of strength Dan entered treatment and struggled through his ordeal to not only survive but to thrive. Dan is currently a television talk-show host on Channel 12 in Oshawa. He's involved with CAMH, the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, and their vital battle to help others in similar circumstances overcome their problems. Can it be done? Talking to Dan, we'd say emphatically, yes.

We're transforming lives.

For help or information, call 1-800-463-4273
www.camh.net

Centre for Addiction and Mental Health
Centre de toxicomanie et de santé mentale

camh

On Sale Now!

chatelaine
WOMAN TO WOMAN

EAT FOR ENERGY!
16 foods to make you stronger, happier, sexier, smarter

FIND YOUR HAPPY WEIGHT
(you could be closer than you think!)

How healthy is your home?

"What should I wear to work?"
FALL'S BEST LOOKS

ONE FAMILY FIGHT FOR JUSTICE

6 INSTANT HOME BRIGHTENERS

20 minute meals
Pasta, chicken, stir-fries & more!

CUT CLUTTER FOR GOOD

Get your Free lipstick!



Chatelaine - woman to woman
www.chatelaine.com

ROGERS
Your World Right Now

United States | >



Mitt Romney calls the Republicans' tactics as foolish, not over-the-top. Barack Obama and the Democrats are focusing on a new appeal to voters.

outreach, it is inclusion, writes Melman, who has dozens more African-American events on his agenda. "Outreach is when you show up to ask for the vote four weeks before the election," he told the journalist group. "I'm here four years before the next presidential election asking for your help." He speaks at length about his grandfather, a Belmont grant who grew up poor and, as a master of ceremonies, joined the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (The NAACP), which has criticized Bush, gave Melman a standing ovation last month. He argues into the crowd parts of the GOP's record on race relations. "Our party was founded to eliminate slavery, and our first Republican president was Abraham Lincoln, the Great Emancipator," he says. It was a Republican president, he adds, Douglas Eisenhower, who sent soldiers to integrate a school in Little Rock—while a Democratic governor blocked the school-house door. In an apology that made no mention of his party, Melman condemned his own party's "trying to benefit politically from racial polarization" in more recent decades.

Meanwhile, back in the red states, Dean is also fighting hard to be heard. He has concluded the party can no longer afford to write off places like Mississippi and Alabama, nor can it continue to rely on third-party interest groups and labor unions to do its grassroots organizing. Dean has begun a campaign to set up an army of paid staffers in every single precinct in the nation (the national party has to date pledged \$3.3 million to 25 such organizations).

Dean needs more than organizations—they need a message. And Dean wants them to wear the language of values from the other side. "It is a moral value to ensure that schools have the resources they need to function properly, and for all Americans to have access to quality health care," explains his spokeswoman, Joshua Barnett. The script is still being written—and was all by Dean. Some Democratic officeholders are signaling a values message at

THE HOPE is that eventually, "someone will hear something they haven't heard before and take another look

at 25 years ago," says Dean. Some Democratic officeholders are signaling a values message at

proceeding them from Internet pornography and type-violent video games, says Barbara Whithead, a Democratic adviser and co-director of a National Marriage Project at Rutgers University. She has been urging Democrats not to neglect their "Republican" base, especially successful entrepreneurs, successful business owners, successful health care workers, successful family and anti-homosexual values," she says. She also told a conference of the Democratic Leadership Council. "And we've done very little to change this view." She is warning Democrats to refocus the message on "progressive" values, protecting children from unapproved corporations. "You target those big corporate forces that are sucking money off of kids," she says, urging a strategy of "naming names, identifying offenders, corporate actions, major lobbying groups who are trying to go over the heads of parents."

Some Democrats are embracing the approach. Senator Hillary Clinton of New York is preparing legislation to block the sale of violent games such as Grand Theft Auto. Sen. Arlen Specter of Pennsylvania is pushing a bill to force all parents to screen out kids, and to levy a 25 percent tax on the industry. Democratic mayors and governors are trying similar tactics.

For now, both parties are talking in the wilderness. But they are betting that if they speak loudly and frequently enough, "somebody there will hear something they haven't heard before and take another look," as Wall says. "That's the goal."

MEDIA BLACKOUT

Are Kurdish lives somehow less valuable than Palestinian and Iraqi ones?

HERE'S A STORY about an uprising in the Middle East you probably haven't heard of. For more than a month, riots and violent protests have swept through the Kurdish areas of northern Iran, resulting in a government crackdown that has killed up to 20 people and injured hundreds more. The unrest began in July 9, when Kurdish activist Shewar Ghader was killed by Iranian security forces in Mahabad. He was allegedly shot, dragged through the streets and tortured to death. Demonstrations against Iran's theocratic dictatorship erupted immediately and spread across the region.

At least 10 Kurdish demonstrators were reportedly killed when the government deployed helicopter gunships against protesters who had attacked a military outpost with rocks and sticks and ransacked government offices in the city of Saqqez. Residents of more Kurdish cities in the region called a general strike in a show of solidarity. Shops closed and streets were empty. All this information comes from Iranian cities and members of dissident groups, who are in contact with Iranian Kurds on the ground and who have passed on their reports, digital photos and lists of the dead. Iran's most news agency acknowledges the unrest, but says that the unrest is the result of "anarchy" and "hooligans."

I am almost certain that everything I have related here is true. It comes from a variety of reliable sources and from people who have family in the area. But I can't compare these reports to those from traditional Western media outlets for the strange reason that, as near as I can tell, no Western reporter has visited the area.

I partially understand why this is the case. Iran, like most dictatorships, assigns a government "minder" to shadow foreign correspondents in the country and to control when the journalist talks to. Most correspondents don't like to mention this in their dispatches. It ruins their allure as rugged



and independent truth seekers.

Journalists who reb a dictatorial government the wrong way may find their visit reviled and their employer's business shut down. In the end, it's easier just to do what you're told. And if you're told not to cover the deadly violence in Kurdistan, well, maybe there's a press conference about Iran's nuclear energy program you can report on instead.

I think this explains in part the media

blackout about what's happening in Iranian Kurdistan, but it doesn't explain everything.

The bigger problem is another one. Some causes, and some people, are falsifiable to Western journalists and to the public at large, and some are not. Imagine for a moment that 20 unarmed Palestinians had been killed by Israeli soldiers in the last month, with hundreds more injured and scores arrested. Is it even conceivable that this would not be front-page news? Already, photographers working in the Middle East have to work hard to avoid getting other photographers in their photos of unrest

throwing Palestinian children. The only photo of the unrest in Iran came from local residents.

And what of the so-called "peace" protesters? Unarmed civilians are being shot down by government troops on helicopters. Where are Bianca Jagger and the rest of the celebrity activists? Where are the marching drums with their "Free Iran" and "Free Kurdistan" banners? Are Kurdish lives somehow less valuable than Palestinian and Iraqi ones? Almost all Kurds are also Muslims. When is the outrage? Or are the deaths of innocent Muslims only annoying when they are killed by Americans or Israelis?

Recently, an Iranian friend in London emailed me. "If only the Kurdish conflict had had the media coverage as the Palestinian one," he wrote. He's right. What's happening in Iranian Kurdistan is important. Iran's religious dictatorship is resented by many, perhaps most, Iranians. But it is particularly abhorred to the country's Kurds.

I visited Iranian Kurdistan for a few days last spring, staying with a family in a small village outside Mahabad. I had spent the previous two weeks in Iran's major cities. Pro-government vigilantes had covered walls with spray-painted death threats against women who didn't wear the hejab. Religious police decreed that even small plastic mannequins on display in pharmacy shop windows and revealing the body's internal organs must have their genitals covered. Undercover government agents watched me and took my photograph when I met with student dissidents. And I never knew when my phone might be tapped.

After all this, Kurdistan felt like a breath of fresh air. Kurdish friends invited me to a wedding, where most and beautiful, unmarried women danced. Kurdish food is a mix of rustic and elegant. "We Kurds dance together," one man told me. "It causes some problems with the Islamic people, but I don't care."

This village is now under the heel of thousands of government troops who have been sent into the region to quell unrest, and the man from the wedding has no choice but to care what the Islamic people think. But it is still possible that the long-immerging anger that is erupting in Iranian Kurdistan will boil over elsewhere in the country as well. If this happens, the consequences will be monumental. Pay no one wages to talk about it now.

Clear sunny skies.

Warm, white sand under foot.

Fresh culinary delights.

The Grenada Experience.



Reawaken Your Senses in Grenada

AIR CANADA
vacations

GRENADA
Grenada, the Spice Island
Spice of the Caribbean



For more information, call 1-855-333-3333 or www.grenadavacations.com

READY FOR REVOLUTION

Amid the shining mega-cities and sudden wealth, millions of impoverished Chinese are rising up in anger, as ANDREA MANDEL-CAMPBELL reports

PAUL MITCHELL was sitting in a hotel room in Beijing, his bags packed. The next morning he was getting on a plane, determined to get as far away from China as possible. His dreams of setting up a joint venture had dissolved in ash. His Chinese partner was convinced the Canadian businessman was doing what most everyone else in China did: skimming money from the company. Physically exhausted and emotionally drained, Mitchell was anxious to put the most painful five years of his life behind him. "I was

getting out of the country and I was never, ever, ever coming back," he recalls.

Then came a knock at the door. It was three of his former employees, begging him to stay. They offered to pick up their families and follow him wherever he went. When the Ontario entrepreneur asked why they would be willing to risk everything to follow a fugitive, he was amazed. "They told me, 'We don't know where to go without you.'"

The heart-wrenching plea moved Mitchell's misgivings, and in 1994 he built his own factory, which manufactures green-han-

dling equipment, outside Beijing. Grateful for a safe lifeline to the often ruthless scramble to survive in the world's fastest-growing economy, Mitchell's employees still cling to their jobs. But billions of others have not been so lucky. In an ironic twist, China's gear is growing ever more dependent and dysfunctional in the face of high unemployment and systemic corruption. While shimmering mega-cities and a rising middle class strut to China's newfound industrial might and burgeoning wealth, social tensions are on the rise, fuelled by a widening rift between rich and poor and a smouldering social safety net

bowing under the strain of fast-paced change. The frustration percolating just below the surface is now rising to the fore, with a dramatic economic in violent protests that are arguably the greatest threat to the ruling Communist party's grip on power, and to the whole country's economic wellbeing.

In one of many recent protests, thousands of angry citizens took to the streets

in the impoverished province of Anhui in July. Provoked by a seemingly minor traffic dispute, the mob set fire to cars, looted stores, and cut off power to the police station. This month, a

42-year-old farmer with terminal lung cancer boarded a bus in Anhui and died on a roadside bench, leaving 31 and killing himself. In June, six farmers were killed and dozens wounded after clashing with armed thugs, allegedly in the pay of local officials, over the mass seizure of farmland. According to Chinese authorities, there were 74,000 such protests last year, a dramatic increase from 2000. While the unrest can still be managed by the party's repressive political machinery, the "underlying source of anger is clearly a source of major concern," says Ken Lieberthal, a professor

Military crackdowns and violent protests have mushroomed over the past year



at the University of Michigan and a one-time adviser to former U.S. president Bill Clinton on Asia. "If the inequality reaches a point where people believe there is no more chance of upward mobility, it will be highly destabilizing. It has to worry the Chinese leadership a great deal."

Although China's official jobless rate is 4.2 percent, the real number is believed to be well above 10 percent. In addition to so many as 40 million people laid off from inefficient state-run enterprises in recent years, another 30 million are listed on the employment rolls of public companies that are no longer operational, but because of poor bankruptcy laws, have never been officially liquidated. No longer receiving salaries, these fleeing workers subsist on a pittance (paying equivalent to US\$12 a month).

They are joined by large numbers of peasants whose land is indiscriminately expropriated to fund China's breakneck industrial expansion. The land grabs, which are often orchestrated by corrupt local leaders and offer little compensation, leave farmers few options. "They remind me of the deportation of the Jews out of Europe to the Warsaw ghettos," says Sherry Cooper, a China watcher and chief economist at BMO Nesbitt Burns in Toronto. "It's a horrible thing."

Some farmers are relocated. Others join the ranks of an estimated 150 million migrant workers driven to the booming cities in search of jobs. Because of China's restrictive household registration system, which prohibits rural inhabitants from moving to the cities, they are forced to work illegally, earning pennies an hour and without access to social services. While the migration is good for China's overly rural economy, another 150 million peasants, lured by the promise of a better life, are expected to move to urban centers in the next decade. "China's economy is a bit because of the massive unemployment," says Mitchell. "I see enough people wandering the streets as it is. If they can't keep this drive of construction and development, what are these people going to do? You just have to think about that. The Chinese are incredibly strong, they can take a lot more than any Canadian ever could. But I think there's a limit to all that, too."

The unmoderated migration is putting tremendous strains on the country's already wobbly infrastructure while sharpening the



income rift, concentrated to the urban-rural divide. As the masses pour into cities to become urban poor, they are coming face to face with the opulent wealth of Chinese tycoons like Zhang Hui, whose fleet of luxury cars includes a yellow Ferrari, a cherry-red Hummer and a silver Mercedes limousine.

In an effort to counteract negative fallout, the Communist party has made the pursuit of a "harmonious society" a top priority. It has repeatedly warned it will not tolerate violence and, until now, has diffused some potential powder kegs by cutting off air and train transport to areas of unrest for weeks at a time. Tiananmen Square, where hundreds of students were moved down by the military in 1989, is consistently closed for "repairs" whenever the anniversary of the massacre draws near.

Since coming to power in 2003, President Hu Jintao and Premier Wen Jiabao have cracked down on media coverage of the conflicts, closing newspapers, blacking university Internet access and forcing Microsoft to ban the words "democracy" and "freedom" from Chinese PCs. The regime overtook the unprecedented step of arresting members of the Hong Kong pro-democracy group and fraud. In recent months, dozens of televi-

sion and lawyers have been rounded up and jailed. "To Ha, social inequality is the greatest threat to regime survival, and he uses these inequalities as threatening social stability," says Jingshi Wen, an associate professor of political science at the University of Alberta. "He's made a pragmatic decision to crack down on the intellectuals so they won't be able to make trouble."

But while the party has been effective in muting dissent, it has been less so at easing the income gap, whereby city dwellers effectively makes no contact as much as rural workers. Although

Beijing has made progress cutting agricultural taxes, the rural population remains bogged down in fees and taxes created by local governments to pay for ever-inflating bureaucracies. "As soon as one tax is abolished, another is being invented," says Wen. "It's a game of survival."

In fact, it is this cat-and-mouse game that goes to the very heart of China's troubles. There is a well-known saying in China: the peasants are high and the emperor is far away. Despite Beijing's autocratic rule, in such a massive country it is at the local level where true power lies and where the most

frustrated abuses—from the flooding of environmental and health regulations to the outright corruption that often fuels unrest—are committed. The countryside is scarred with blighted streets maintained by the toxic runoff from factories that despoil farmers' fields and make the population with cancer and horrible birth defects. In mid-August, 122 coal miners drowned in south-

ern Guangdong province, just the latest in a slew of horrific industrial disasters. Since the start of July, 218 accidents in China's mines have claimed almost 700 lives, according to a government report.

Critics say the death toll keeps rising because corrupt local officials allow hundreds of illegal mines to operate unregulated, to feed the country's demand for power.

And it is no coincidence that potentially devastating pandemics like SARS and avian flu have plagued China. In the latest outbreak of so-called swine flu, 39 people have died and more than 200 have been infected. To date, four local officials in Sichuan province, China's top pork producer, have been sacked for faking reports about the spread of the disease. "The rural public health

system is antiquated and it's deteriorating, not improving," says Lubberfeld. "It creates risks for the entire society, and now that China is so integrated into the global economy, for the whole world."

Similarly, the roots of China's pervasive corruption can be traced back to local party leaders who ran their territories like fiefdoms and often work hand-in-glove with state-owned enterprises whose "corruptive advantage" lies in the privacy of unregulated property rights. In perhaps the most startling case, U.S. automobile General Motors is suing China's Chery Automobile Co. for invading office after its model Chery chairman of the board is supposed to be the top government official of Wuhan province. Lubberfeld predicts that, within a year, privacy will become "the biggest single economic issue between the U.S. and China." But while Beijing recognizes the problem, fixing it would entail "changing the entire political strategy of economic reform." So instead, the central government is taking a hard line on officials caught with sanctions burning with methane in cash. In the past four years, China executed at least 25 officials for corruption-related offenses—more than the rest of the world combined. Close to one million party members have also been sanctioned.

With an estimated US\$60 billion washed away each year in offshore accounts, corruption is not only undermining China's economic boom, but the ruling party's political legitimacy. The combination of official corruption and social unrest could one day unravel the party's monopoly on power, says Wen. "When people perceive they are not benefiting from economic growth and they see it primarily as a result of official corruption, I personally see that as a deadly combination."

That kind of systemic breakdown could manifest itself in a number of ways, from a run on the remaining banking system to a pandemic health scare resulting from government malfeasance. The hallmarks of such a scenario are over power. In July, Beijing was forced to close eight credit co-ops after their fears of imminent bankruptcy spelled a run on the rural banks, which had a non-performing loan ratio of 96 per cent. And after the Baofeng suicide bombing, news reports were quick to point out that some 88 per cent of the country's farmers cannot afford to see a doctor.

The frustration abating aggression by what

Mitchell and other foreigner perceive as a complete lack of regard by the newly wealthy for the plight of the rural and working poor. "There's no connection between having that much money and having social responsibility to someone who doesn't," says Mitchell. "It's exactly the opposite to what you would think a Communist system should be. The rich have no eye for the poor."

CHINA'S city dwellers have long believed the country's 750 million peasants are somehow "less than human"

China's city dwellers have long believed the country's 750 million peasants are somehow "less than human," explains Elliot Wilson, a correspondent with Hong Kong's Standard newspaper. "There is a fear of the mob. Unfortunately, any 'mob' peasants have been localized and usually spontaneous.

But pockets of unrest are becoming more politically organized," says Wen. "which

is quite alarming to the central government." For some, however, the real cause for concern lies not with the struggling masses but the cold indifference of China's one-child policy. While parents prefer to carry their so-called "Little Emperors" rather than put them in orphanages, these children will soon be shouldering a much heavier burden: supporting up to eight grandparents should they marry. With more people retiring over the next decade than entering the workforce, China, the saying goes, may grow old before it grows rich.

As parents, and sometimes entire villages, funnel all their hopes and dreams into a single golden son, the prospect of a future without any real payoff may not be well with this new generation. "There will be a day of reckoning," says Wilson. "It will happen when these Little Emperors, who are pampered within an inch of their lives, grow up and are confronted with the system."

That is, if the "system" doesn't collapse under its own weight in the meantime. ■

Andrew Rossiter, Canada's first foreign-born book critic, also does not drink tea, but is published by Douglas & McIntyre in fall 2006.

Understand the rising threat of homegrown terrorism.



"In *The Martyr's Oath*, Stewart Bell, Canada's most respected journalist covering terrorism, tells how Mohammed Mansour Jaberh, a teenage Canadian, was selected by the Al Qaeda leadership to coordinate a powerful attack in Southeast Asia that would have led to more destruction than 9/11. There is no better way to understand how Western youth are being drawn to terrorism than to read this story of the rise of a new generation of terrorist."

—Robert Gosselin, author of *Jihad in Quesada*
Global Network of Terror
(Columbia University Press)

Available now at bookstores everywhere!

WILEY
Now you know
why.

WE KEEP AHEAD OF OUR COMPETITORS
SO YOU CAN KEEP AHEAD OF YOURS.



AUTHORITIC™ SM13000
EXCLUSIVE



TREO™ 650 by palmOne
EXCLUSIVE



BLACKBERRY 7290™
EXCLUSIVE

More Canadians choose Rogers™ Wireless for their
all-in-one voice and email devices than any other provider. Here's why:

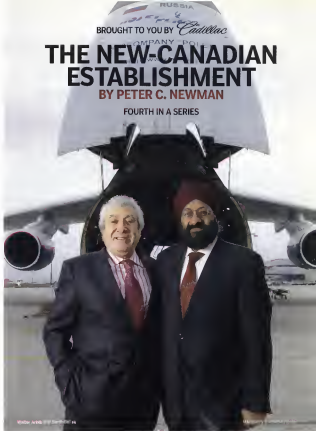
- Rogers continues to bring you the best selection of the latest devices first.
- Rogers operates on the only network that allows you to use your device overseas the same way you would at home.*
- Rogers provides dedicated in-house BlackBerry support to all of our BlackBerry customers – a service you won't get from most other providers.



GO TO ROGERS.COM, 1-866-852-3655, A ROGERS™ WIRELESS, ROGERS PLUS OR ROGERS VIDEO STORE FOR DETAILS.

BROUGHT TO YOU BY *Cadillac*
COMPANY POLICE
**THE NEW-CANADIAN
ESTABLISHMENT**
BY PETER C. NEWMAN

FOURTH IN A SERIES



If there's a global hot spot, SkyLink's planes are there

A unique Toronto firm does a thriving business going where others fear to fly

THE SUCCESS-ORIENTED newsmen I've interviewed so far for this story on the New Canadian Establishment have been conventional entrepreneurs who took risks by asking their future in the northern part of the New World. But having arrived here, they have taken pride in how quickly and how well they have conformed to their Canadian role models. They have learned that to be successful in this country requires living an orderly existence—the avoidance of anything unpredictable, such as engaging in romance with global agitators to whom one has not been properly introduced.

Wahid Arbib, a Libyan Jew, and Smitk Babes, an East African Sikh, who run and own SkyLink Aviation Inc., a little-known Toronto-based company of adventurers, are driven by exactly the opposite, off-beat instincts. The firm dispatches its planes to the world's most

turbulent back alleys and farthest frontiers. Its employees arrive as good Samaritans courting danger, and frequently find it. Although their prime missions are to deliver medicines and food, ferry aid workers, evacuate refugees and provide logistical support through air drops, their planes have been shot down and there have been serious casualties.

The firm's founding partners are constantly in flight and flux, operating on continents teeming with danger, then days filled with urgent assignments to provide instant relief from natural disasters, wars, the perils of genocide, or such mundane requests as supplying specialty third planes for packs of bloodhounds and their handlers (who refused to take off if their animals were forced to travel caged in cages) to Turkey, where the dogs were assigned to sniff out earthquake survivors.

On my first day, up to 120 aircraft bearing SkyLink's corporate logo (all but 10 of them loaded) pursue various missions impossible on four continents, guided by the firm's founding partners. Arbib is this odd couple's extremely gruff, gang-bro drum major, ready to take on almost any risk that might improve the human condition. He is one of those rare people who glow in the dark with good intentions but, unlike most of us, he can actually do something about them. His urban dal parrot, Babes, a construction architect but equally intense, has dramatic impulses cloaked with bottom-line realism. The two men present very different demeanors and their management styles are almost contradictory. But they share

the same fever in the blood, so much that they field not only each others' sentences but often each others' thoughts. "We are very different personalities," Babes told me, "but the outcome of our thinking is usually the same. There's a huge bond between us. We must have been together in a previous life."

The company's turnover this year will be around \$400 million, there are no other shareholders. Both families live well but not as generously as they could, since nearly all profits are reinvested (Smitk, Arbib does drive a Mercedes and Babes a Mercedes-Benz.)

Their differences in temperament are due mostly to their very different backgrounds. Born in the Punjab region of India, Babes, now 54, grew up in East Africa, raised as a travel agent in London and moved to Canada in 1979. He had a rough start, operating a two-room office. "When I first came to Canada, suppliers required three references just to drop water bottles in the office," he complains. He met Arbib nearly 10 years later and they decided to join energies. If Arbib is possessed of genuine sympathy for survivors, it's because he is one

he was born in Tunis 64 years ago to an upper class Jewish family. After the Second World War, they were living in Libya, where a pogrom forced them to flee when Arbib was nine. Educated in Italy, he then moved to Israel where, like Babes, he went into the travel business, then

Shared humanitarian and spiritual concerns help form a powerful bond between the "very different personalities" of SkyLink partners Babes and Arbib



Take no prisoners. Well, no more than six.



THE 2005 CADILLAC SRX. Roadster-inspired performance and seating for seven. It's *Car and Driver's* "Best Luxury SUV" for 2004 and 2005. Call 1-888-446-2000 or visit gmcanada.com

*With available fuel-flow testing.



CADILLAC SRX
GREAT THINGS



Transporting Sikh holy scrolls to Toronto (left), returning the looted casket to Ethiopia. Arbib and Salim meet up Prime Minister Paul Martin in Toronto last year.



left for Canada in 1993 and joined Baber in SkyLink.

The company's permanent payroll has since grown to about 600, including Italian aviators and Canadian pilot pilots. The firm's main animators are the different themselves speak four languages each. The firm has offices in Ottawa, Montreal, New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Miami, Frankfurt, Moscow, Lisbon, Dubai, Baghdad, Khartoum and Durban, where 15 of its helicopters are operating on behalf of the Canadian government. Their main clients are the United Nations, the Pentagon, the Red Cross, the Italian government, the Israeli government, various international aid agencies, NATO and Canada's Department of National Defence. An arm of the company operates a thriving tourism business as a profitable backup to their more daring ventures, with nine million negotiable airline fares available annually to its wholesale customers. "I don't like passengers," Baber confesses. "They complicate too much. I prefer cargo."

The aircraft they lease are the most modern available, but operational decisions are taken in a surprisingly low tech room in SkyLink's low-rise Riverside headquarters. Aircraft locations and their flight plans are entered on a large blackboard in different colored chalk. The company has access to insurance underwriters 24 hours a day so no time is wasted searching for a firm willing to underwrite the risks involved. (The premium for one landing in Sarajevo to provide food for paratroopers was \$250,000. During 1994 alone, SkyLink spent \$7 million on war insurance.)

SkyLink's reputation is based on dependability and speed of response. That, of course, depends on the partners' ability to predict the flow of political events. When I asked them what those sources of intelligence they use to get ahead of their competitors, they burst out laughing, and sensuously revealed their secret: "We watch CNN." In fact, they have learned to anticipate the news, mainly by receiving reports from their people in the field. They invest time and planning in the handling of possible emergency

flights that might be involved in evolving situations before events warrant it. Once they do, SkyLink is ready to take off, even in countries that lack basic infrastructure. "What we do best is logistical management and on-time delivery," says Baber. "We can start moving aircraft within three hours of notification, and our global resources are used to being woken up at three in the morning for landing rights in some obscure airfield."

When the tsunami hit Southeast Asia last Christmas season, for example, Arbib recalls, "Two minutes after we received the news, we had our people preparing thousands of getting aircraft ready. They departed three hours later and when we arrived, the flood waters were still on the runways." SkyLink itself contributed emergency pharmaceuticals and flew out some Italian vacationers stranded in the Maldives.

A log of the firm's assignments reads like the history of our turbulent times: it ferried Canadian troops and equipment to help out with the devastating 1998 ice storm in Ontario and Quebec; offered rescue flights during the student riots in Jakarta and the Kosovo-Albanian border clashes of the same year; flew to Afghanistan, Taiwan, Turkey and Honduras to provide earthquake relief; delivered a whole lot of potato soup to North Korea, using a leased U.S. jet, the first American flag aircraft allowed to land there.

An Angolan rebel militia downed a company plane in 1992, killing the pilot. When the Cambodian Khmer Rouge offered a bounty for every UN aircraft shot down, one of SkyLink's helicopters landed home with hundreds of bullet holes. The company dropped food supplies for UN workers over Rwanda, especially against NATO's directives, distributed bullet boats during Iraq's steady bombings and flew the only civilian aircraft landed with downed medical supplies to land in an uncontrolled airport in Nepal, the Shree Muktanagar camp and one of Iraq's most dangerous camps.

Arbib's own involvement in military-making mission was the return to Ethiopia by SkyLink of a 1,700-year-old holy shikha that Indian doctor Bontu Mussolini had plundered when he conquered the

North African country in 1937. Located in the ancient city of Aksum, the sacred object weighs 160 tonnes and is 24 m high, the equivalent of a nine-story building. Mussolini, who saw it as a symbol of his fascist might, had cut it into three pieces and brought it by ship back to Rome where it sat in the middle of a busy roadabout for 68 years. The Italian government repeatedly promised to return it, which proved difficult since the reconstructed Ethiopia no longer had a sea port.

Appreciating the importance of a nation's cultural artifacts, Arbib became determined to fly the monument back to its rightful host. That required helping Italy lease an *Anasov An-124*, the world's second largest aircraft—69 m long, with a payload capacity of 150 tonnes—from Ukraine. "At that stage, I told the Italians, 'Okay, we are ready to do it,'" says Arbib. He also made it clear that SkyLink didn't want money for the job—just two statements from the minister of foreign affairs. "The first was that Italy was proud to be returning something that had been during the war, and that it hoped the world will follow this example and return stolen works of art. The second was that I wanted to pay Italy back for what it did to help the Jews during their after the war in 1945." The Italians agreed and the shikha was returned to Aksum (where the local runway had to be extended to accommodate the giant aircraft) in three flights between April 18 and 24 this year.

For Baber, the equivalent mission of the heart was the flight the previous April carrying 149 Sikh holy scrolls from a Golden Temple of Amritsar in northern India to Toronto, to replace looted copies in Canadian shrines. Since those sacred objects are accorded the same reverence as living parts, each of the holy books was strapped into its own front-draped seat. "We were staying perfect all along, 24 hours without sleeping," Baber recalls. "There were only the Sikh holy men and myself, plus a companion, no passengers, no cargo. The winds were very heavily against us, and the pilot came to us and said, 'We may have to go to Ottawa to refuel because the winds are wrong.' We had many people waiting for us in Toronto

He went to a lower altitude and the winds dropped for some time, so we landed where we were expected, only half an hour late. For me, that was a miracle on the flight, and hardly anybody knows that."

While the partners thrive on crises and catastrophes, they also serve humanitarian causes without pay. When they heard about legs being blown off innocent children in Mozambique, they financed a local training centre for demining the countryside. They also help sponsor an international link between Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children and African infirmaries to provide emergency medical advice. When one of their pilots assigned to evacuate UN personnel from Rwanda reported finding 900 abandoned children with no facilities, they played a major role in setting up a temporary orphanage. "You go to a country, you become part of that country—to sleep at night, you have to do something," is Arbib's simple explanation.

The puzzle remains why this most global of international enterprises has chosen Canada as its headquarters. "It is the best place in the world to be," says Baber. "It's like a second Switzerland. You are well close wherever you are, and the diversity of the people in this country is like nowhere else. Strategically, it provides access to all the international communication. Canada has good relations with most countries, and since we are in peacekeeping, that is the best country to operate from. Canada also encourages us to maintain their identities. Once you go to the States they want you to become American and forget where you came from."

After interviewing SkyLink's lively partners for most of a day, I remark that at times they seem to be as much in show as in the humanitarian rescue business. "We've never initiated any event for show business purposes," Baber sternly replies. "Life and death are at stake in many of our missions." But then Arbib points out that their upcoming flights will include airlifts dying elephant back to his original African habitat, and perhaps delivering the open boxes to killed troops in Afghanistan this Christmas. That may ease.

DIVIDED BY THE TRACKS

An Ontario town is torn by questions of safety, versus quality of life



The controversy erupted after a 12-year-old girl was killed at this Brackville, Ont., crossing

BRACKVILLE is a community divided by the railroad—in more ways than one. The tracks bisect the eastern Ontario town but, since Feb. 17, they have caused a much more significant split. That's the day two local schoolgirls were hit by a train. Twelve-year-old Sabrina Lajunen died instantly while her friend, charged with a broken arm. In the wake of the accident at a crossing equipped with a barrier, flashing lights and bells, CN has wrangled Brackville's six-year-old train whistle ban, casting a rift over whether the move means increased safety or simply more noise. Now the debate must maybe be the only thing in town louder than the train.

The issue has become so big, the local paper has stopped printing letters on the subject. *Recorder and Times* editor Barry Babin says he's being inundated by mail but there is nothing new to say on the subject. "After five months, it seems getting pretty repetitive," he says. Despite what he calls a "terrible outpouring of support" after the accident, the unity of the town seems to have shaken community solidarity. Many residential areas lie adjacent to the tracks and the general hospital is only one block away. According to Marshall Chasen, coordinator of research for the Canadian Hearing Society, potential effects of the noise include disrupted sleep and increased stress levels.

At present, trains must whistle four times for each crossing. "But when you've got five crossings in three kilometres," says Carol Cargrove, director of operations for the city of Brackville, "you're on the horn the whole

way through." And this process is repeated about 50 times every 24 hours.

That's a lot of noise. So it's no wonder this debate is not unique to Brackville. According to Jean-Daniel Harnett, CN's director of communications, there is "quite a sizable number" of bans in place or being considered across the country from Chilliwack, B.C., to Drummondville, Que. The same is true south of the border, where new legislation allows municipalities to apply to

So Tri-County trade himself between a rock and a hard place. Many of the constraints were the last negotiated but CN has told him the issue is not open for discussion. "I feel like I'm leaping any head against a wall," he says. Whistle bans can be revoked at CN's discretion and, according to Thomson, the company "felt it was a change we needed to make in order to add another level of safety" in Brackville.

Seems logical, given February's tragedy, but the noise isn't so sure. In 1995, two high school girls were killed at a Brackville crossing. That was four years before the ban. "Would a whistle have made a difference?" he asks about this year's accident. "I don't know—but it didn't in 1995."

Roger Perry, a 25-year resident whose home sits two blocks from the tracks, doesn't believe it would have helped. As long as current warnings are obeyed, the whistles "aren't overwhelming anything except passing a lot of people off," he says. He finds bigger, better barriers or new technology like directed sound would be more effective solutions. Thomson says CN is looking into safety innovations, such as second train warning systems, with Transport Canada but things are still at the study stage.

So, for now, Perry will have to wait. And Thomson's travels look set to continue. Of all the political issues he's faced, "this has to be the most lingering one," he says. "And I don't think it's over yet by a long shot." ☐

SHORT distances between crossings can lead to an uninterrupted wall as trains pass by 50 times every 24 hours

become either "quiet zones" or "partial quiet zones" in which trains cannot blow their whistles between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m.

Ken Torkamp, Brackville's mayor, would welcome a nighttime ban as a compromise. Nobody has complained about the daytime whistles, he says, and a partial ban is precisely what the coroner's inquest recommended. No dice, say the people at CN. They take an all-or-nothing approach to bans, arguing a different warning system for day and night might be foolhardy. "Partial bans just don't work," says Ian Thomson, CN's regional manager for public affairs in Ontario.

SOME SEE A PLACE ON A MAP



SOME SEE A PLACE IN HISTORY



By seeing beyond the dark and dull beers of the day, in 1842 our visionary brewer created a beer unique in taste and distinct in colour, Pilsner Urquell. Using the soft local water, the "noble" Saaz hop and pioneering brewing techniques, he put the town of Pilsen on the map, and on bars all around the world.

The world's first golden beer, its exquisite flavour is seen by many today as the authentic taste of beer. Try it and see for yourself.

SEE HOW BEER IS MEANT TO TASTE

"With caribou migrating right through the drill site, our boys won't even need to ship in fresh meat."



Imagine the consequences. You come home after a long day of drilling and discover literally with rights up to your chest. In the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, that doesn't seem to come true. For

thousands of years herds of caribou have migrated in the refuge to give birth right in the open air. What if they don't? And after a hard day, there's nothing worse than all your caribou being killed.

Drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. It's only natural!



Some people think drilling in a wildlife refuge is a good idea. If you don't, sign the petition at donotdrill.ca

Business

BLACK'S 'TORPEDO'

Only the threat of jail brought David Radler to heel, writes PETER C. NEWMAN

WHEN DAVID RADLER became Canada's most notorious reformer last week, it was a stunning repudiation of his 36-year partnership with Conrad Black, the notorious power broker who turned himself into a weapon of mass self-destruction. Though he may not admit it in court, Radler was more than Black's fiduciary partner. He was his alter ego, his hatchet man, the guy who denied even the fancy executives that created the world's third-largest media empire, then turned it into a junkyard of broken dreams and shattered promises.

Unlike Black, who courted the spotlight, Radler refused mass interviews, presenting himself as a simple man of God on a private mission with no name. One source of the obsession. He would often take me to lunch (usually by bus) and a Diet Pepsi, and a few times invited me to his home on Vancouver's prestigious Marae Drive, mostly for Jean Charest fundraisers. To my surprise, this corporate fixer's house was decorated with a tastefully chosen Group of Seven collection.

As we began to talk, it came out that his father had owned Au Lait Qu'Édouard, a popular Montreal restaurant in the 1960s that attracted patrons by having dry pipes run around the floor. David's first job was to create a handbooks marketing program for the Curve Lake Indian Reserve, north of Peterborough, Ont., which he did so successfully that he later developed similar schemes for Mother First Nations bands. He joined Black

in buying the *Sherbrooke Daily Record*, where he is remembered mainly for the day an employee came into his office with a list of grievances. Instead of listening calmly, Radler had two cops taken off his own paycheck for writing a check of paper. He went on to create the three-man news department for his and Conrad's chain of 21 daily *Starling* papers that limited editorial staff to an editor, sports writer and general reporter, with the balance of copy provided by news wires. In 1976, when a *Pacific Western* Airlines jet crashed at Cranbrook, B.C., killing all 43 on board, the *Starling* owned paper there covered the tragedy with Canadian Press dispatches. Alan Zimmerman, then a Southern Ontario who had to deal with him, described

Radler and his executives as "some very tough guys. They're not people. They're torpedoes."

When I asked Radler how he picked the newspapers he chose to buy, his explanation was simple. He would move into a likely property and count the desks, calculating how many reporters he could afford to fire to still provide enough editorial matter to separate the ads.

When the Hollinger operation went international, Radler took over the U.S. operation, which consisted mostly of the kind of small papers that he and Black saw as an account of dipping to themselves for local, low-free profit. Radler was involved in every one of the corporate shenanigans currently being challenged by the courts and SEC investigators.

David Radler was lively and interesting, but his notion that cost-cutting constituted good publishing is not going to win him

many exonerations at the tall end of his poster. Now that he has agreed to plead guilty to the virtual indecency trial at the companies whose chief financial officer he became, I hope this investigation will mark the end of the stunning acquisition made by a former publisher of the *Jerusalem Post*. With scarcely controlled fury he claimed that when the paper was under Radler's wing, he confiscated a fund voluntarily collected from readers to help impoverished Israeli citizens, and used the money to finance his campaign to smear an Israeli ambassador from a Jerusalem apartment. Radler regarded the fund as his exclusive domain, and when Conrad asked to see the paper, Radler obliged by arranging for him to order it by a sea mail. He held Black in little awe and less respect. He once confessed to me that he thought "Conrad has a psychopathological ego."

Radler at the toughest seemed executive I ever encountered. Only facing up to 35 years of jail time brought him to heel. When he agreed to plead guilty, he knew they were up, and that only by co-operating with the authorities would he have a chance to limit the damage. He has come a long way from the Curve Lake Indian Reserve.



The tough-minded Radler, shown in 1995, held Black in little awe and less respect

CANADA'S BEST SCHOOLS

Introducing 10 extraordinary high schools that set standards for excellence in their own distinct ways

FOR HIS LANDMARK 2003 book, *Making Schools Work*, American researcher and author William Dwyer studied more than 200 schools in six North American cities, looking at what makes the difference between great places of learning and mediocre ones. In Oshkosh, a professor at the Anderson School of Management at the University of California, Los Angeles, concluded that the most commonly cited factors, including class size and funding levels, were not, in the end, decisive. Instead, the school districts that excelled, whether

urban, poor or affluent neighborhoods, were those that decentralized control to local schools and principals and encouraged them to think outside the box about providing families with the widest possible range of educational opportunities. One of the very best paragon schools, says Dwyer, was Edmonston Public Schools, which he described as "a shining example to educators throughout the world."

It's perhaps no coincidence that two of the 10 schools featured in our second annual Canada's Best Schools survey are from Edmonston. Both Old Soons and Jasper Place are examples of how public high schools, under the right leadership, can offer students programs to meet the very particular needs—and challenges—of their students. In fact, all 10 high schools featured in these

pages (and another 10 high achievers at www.macleans.ca) show how principals and teachers, given the freedom to innovate, can promote academic excellence. That they often do so under the most adverse circumstances makes their achievements all the more remarkable.

Consider Kipling Collegiate Institute in one of Toronto's most impoverished areas. It's an agglomeration of an immigrant population hailing from 54 countries and families who often subsist on welfare. Principal Roger Dale has gone the extra distance, helping neighbourhood social workers and support groups to work together on the students' behalf. Or Winnipeg's Children of the Earth, a predominantly Aboriginal school, where One principal Leanne Bolander uses mandatory Cree and Ojibwa language classes to

help students move from being "at-risk" to being confident and successful.

Sometimes, it's an educator's private passion that helps inspire students to reach new heights. At Seely's Secondary on Vancouver Island, Peter Mason, a husband-and-wife education teacher as well as a veteran diver, created thousands of dollars in state-of-the-art outdoor and indoor climbing facilities that have become an integral part of school life. In Victoria, Reynolds Secondary principal John Hannon, the father of two accomplished girls, seized on a new provincial policy demanding more flexibility and choice in public schools to introduce a credit course in soccer that's producing students who score big on the field and in the classroom.

However they do it, the staff at Canada's best schools put the lie to the stereotype

that high school is something to be endured, not embraced. These kids are actually choosing to spend more time with teachers and peers. At Montreal's John Tenen, students show up before school every day and on Saturdays to take part in an Autism "Studio" that earns them credits toward their diplomas. Students at Vancouver's Kitchener Secondary travel to the remote island of Guelph for an annual writing retreat co-hosted by teacher John Gifford.

The enthusiasm is infectious. When Macleans' editors in February to nominate their favorite high schools, we received more than 1,800 letters from principals, teachers, parents—and, of course, the kids themselves. They read about nearly 200 schools in all, citing everything from innovation and academic achievement to com-

munity involvement and great teachers. Macleans' editors also factored in the Prince of Wales Awards for Teaching Excellence—given to 65 top teachers a year—and results from national district academic competitions. (Our sister publication *Today's Parent* is featuring 40 great elementary and middle schools in its September issue.)

Deflated to no extent, though, what makes a great school tick remains the enormous potential of a single educator to effect change. Bruce Coggins, the veteran principal at this year's selection for overall achievement, Jasper Place, is perhaps the clearest example. After assuming the helm of the handsomely staffed school 10 years ago, Coggins took ad-

vantage of the venerable Edmonston Public Schools' assets as its principal. He wiped out an inherited \$500,000 deficit, replacing it by last year with a \$400,000 surplus. He did that not by cutting corners, but by vastly improving overall student performance—Edmonston public high schools are funded on the basis of course completion; the more Grade 10 students a school takes through to graduation the more money it receives from the district. Small wonder Coggins calls Coggins "a perfect example of an over-rewarded principal." Small wonder Jasper Place is flying so high.

WITH KATHA HAMILTON

Signed profiles in this feature were written by: Brian Bergman, Ben MacQueen and Katha Hamilton.



ON THE WEB Learn more about Canada's great high schools. Success stories from our 10 winners can be found at www.macleans.ca/cb/schools

Innovation

JOHN RENNIE HIGH SCHOOL
MONTREAL

It's hard to avoid the cliché of a school growing young minds when you look at John Rennie's student-maintained computer garden. But teacher Eric Obachew found that when it came to growing things, his students literally didn't know which way was up. "It's a real learning process for them: knowing to plant the tulip bulbs pointy end skyward, that type of thing," he says. Earthworms, however, was never an issue. When

An idea-driven staff helps, too. Drama teacher Louise Chalmers decided five years ago that the students who put on the annual play should have their work count toward their diploma. The result was the Actors' Studio, a group of 32 drama kids and stage technicians Grades 9 to 10 who meet an hour before school each day and every Saturday. Not only do the students, who have to audition to get into the class, benefit from

COURSES INCLUDE EVERYTHING FROM SILK- SCREENING TO JOURNALISM TO SCUBA DIVING

may be more than a class six years ago, the students started a club. Since then, they've planted a wealth of perennial and annuals, perennials, geraniums, cactus gardens and toolshed. The beautiful space is now used for everything from Shakespeare in the Park to an annual display of Halloween pumpkins. And that's the thing with John Rennie students: they're the innovative spirit personified. Any idea that sparks an idea is met with a good chance of becoming a reality. The drama department, leadership council and other groups, among others, have creatively revamped their programs to become more responsive to student needs. The changes aren't achieving their goal: the student population has increased by 50 per cent over the past few years. For Coggins, people frequently apply for Quebec government entrepreneurship grants, which have supported a school magazine as well as the garden and other projects. The course offers themselves up as nothing if not diverse, with everything from silkscreening to journalism to a scuba diving class that held an underwater graduation a few years back. "We let the students be driven by the students' interests," says former principal Nancy Hain. "And we applaud our teacher's success, which is ongoing."

may be more than a class six years ago, the students started a club. Since then, they've planted a wealth of perennial and annuals, perennials, geraniums, cactus gardens and toolshed. The beautiful space is now used for everything from Shakespeare in the Park to an annual display of Halloween pumpkins. And that's the thing with John Rennie students: they're the innovative spirit personified. Any idea that sparks an idea is met with a good chance of becoming a reality. The drama department, leadership council and other groups, among others, have creatively revamped their programs to become more responsive to student needs. The changes aren't achieving their goal: the student population has increased by 50 per cent over the past few years. For Coggins, people frequently apply for Quebec government entrepreneurship grants, which have supported a school magazine as well as the garden and other projects. The course offers themselves up as nothing if not diverse, with everything from silkscreening to journalism to a scuba diving class that held an underwater graduation a few years back. "We let the students be driven by the students' interests," says former principal Nancy Hain. "And we applaud our teacher's success, which is ongoing."

challenged students to learn to respect for the children's tradition of their lives. "It was great to see how excited the kids' parents were to see them participate in something," she says, "because they're not as much a part of school usually."

At John Rennie, students learn to want to get involved. The leadership council has more than 150 members. They're also electioneers—anyone with an idea is given the chance to run with it. Along with more than the usual number of school activities, the school has a leading leadership conference for 250 local Grade 6 kids. Any student entering John Rennie's Grade 6 in the coming fall is invited to work in June, so they're a part of the council before the year even starts. "It's a way of getting our hands on the kids' ideas," says staff adviser John O'Donnell. When they're growing minds, it helps to get an early start.



Overall JASPER PLACE HIGH SCHOOL, EDMONTON

At Jasper Place principal Bruce Coggins shows a visitor around his massive, 60,000-sq-ft school, the historic nature of this 2,000-student institution quickly becomes apparent. Audiotape, welding and woodworking shops, as well as a perfume and leather-making beauty salon and commercial food kitchen, added to Jasper Place's roots as a vocational school. Elsewhere, now open row of gleaming white campanile—the school boasts an 800-terabyte network—signal a new era and explain why Jasper Place students are now winning international awards for multimedia designs. Meanwhile, intimate classrooms pro-

vided the many of the school's 400 special needs students and students with learning disabilities to make sure no child gets left behind. It's a rare school that sets its goals so high on so many levels, that it does not suddenly fall in on itself. "We take particular pride in being able to meet all the needs of the students who live in our geographic boundaries," says Coggins. "We think we do a darn good job of it."

It wasn't always like this. Jasper Place used to have a terrible reputation as a grant school where kids sometimes went to school in the streets. Under Coggins' leadership, the school has reinvented itself over the past decade—but not at the expense of its traditional strengths. Innovations like PASS (Program for Academic Student Success) target students who are underachievers in high school. So Grade 10 classes, each with 10 students, are assigned to teachers who know how to motivate underachieving

kids. Student progress and behaviour are monitored closely, if someone is absent, a call home is made immediately. More than half of these would-be dropouts go on to graduate from high school.

At the same time, Coggins has beefed up opportunities for college and university-bound kids, who now make up about half the student population. Jasper Place is the only school in Edmonton to offer both informal and formal Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate. Of the city's 37 public high schools, Jasper Place is the only one to offer average diploma exam scores, an impressive showing given its diverse student population. It was also one of the few Canadian schools to receive William Osler's 2001 book, *Understanding Schools*, a professor at the Anderson School of Management at the University of California, Los Angeles,

Students manipulate
hardware into projects
beginning in middle
of Jasper Place

Coggins hailed Jasper Place as "the Swiss watch of high schools" and Coggins as "the watchmaker" who has painstakingly assembled several different programs and teachers into a seamless working whole.

Another Coggins innovation concerns career planning. At the start of Grade 10, all students, along with their parents, sit down with a school counsellor to discuss what they want to do after high school. If uncertain, students can take interest and aptitude surveys to get them thinking. Kabe Luma, who graduated earlier this year, credits the school with helping her to establish a career in psychology. Attending such a large, multi-faceted institution, while initially daunting, paid dividends for her: "I'm going to have diversity," says Luma. "It's an education in the real world, not a sheltered environment."

Sports

REYNOLDS SECONDARY SCHOOL, VICTORIA

WHEN IT comes to soccer, Michael Simpson and Nicole Logan—who wear Grade 12 at Reynolds this fall—are, literally, students of the game. For them and the rest of the school's 60 member Centre for Soccer Excellence, the sport is a credit course—part of the curriculum from Grades 9 to 12. “Not every kid wants to sit in a classroom all day,” says Logan, explaining the program’s appeal. During four periods a week, they walk out in the gym, practice passing and ball control on the field, or scrimmage. For one period each week, the course moves into

the classroom where the emphasis is on strategy, training, attitude, teamwork and nutrition. Simpson and Logan hope to earn spots on college or university teams. Meanwhile, says Dave Hurrenrich, the school’s athletic director, they are absorbing life lessons that will serve them well on and off the field.

The program, started in 2003, is a porting legacy of principal John Hurrenrich, who has left Reynolds this summer for a similar

Simpson and Logan practice heading the ball in the ground-breaking soccer program

position in a Seattle area school. The father of two soccer-playing girls, Hurrenrich was troubled by the statistics students make for the sports they love. Practice and games get postponed in on evenings and weekends, in the expense of homework, other school activities, music or family time. If those are consistent programs for the academics, why, he figured, why not for sports?

His appointment as principal in 2001 coincided with a new provincial policy mandating that school boards offer greater flexibility and choice. That opened the way for the soccer program, similar to one for hockey academics already in place in B.C. schools. Curiously, one impediment Hurrenrich and his coaches faced was the school board’s fear that Reynolds would have an “elitist” program inaccessible to most students in the region. Hurrenrich insists he wasn’t after the best,

“just those who want to be the best.” Still, he’s not sure why choice is discouraged in sports. “Why do we suck in virtually every other sport than hockey?” he asks. “Hockey is the only sport where we do what other countries do—to get the kids in a young age and throw all kinds of training at them. If the goal is to get peak-level performances, there’s no question that what we’re doing is the right thing.”

Two years ago, Reynolds had B.C.’s only non-hockey sport academy. This fall, there’ll be about 30, with five or six specializing in soccer and others in aspects as diverse as rowing, basketball and lacrosse. And it doesn’t hurt that about 50 of the 60 students are the Reynolds soccer squad made the last year’s roll. “This is where they’re supposed to meet and act,” said Hurrenrich. “They want to come to school every day.”



Academic

OLD SCONA ACADEMIC HIGH SCHOOL, EDMONTON

Lou Yarrow checks off the memory. Earlier this year, Old Scona’s principal had a call from a couple who were expecting their first child. “They were asking about entrance requirements to our school for when their child reached high school age,” says Yarrow. Home educators at many private schools may be accustomed to such calls, but for a public school principal they are a rarity. Their ages, Old Scona is not your typical public school. Located in a leafy neighborhood within walking distance of the University of Alberta, it attracts high academic achievers from across the city who must pass an entrance exam before being admitted. They are then immersed in a rigorous program of study aimed at exceeding academic excellence. The results fully 80 per cent of Old Scona’s students are on the honour roll, while 95 per cent of this year’s graduating class is headed to university.

But that it’s a small school,” says Yarrow. “Everyone knows everyone else and there’s a great rapport between the older and younger students.”

During the regular school day, students concentrate on the core academic subjects such as English, math, social studies and science. Options and extra courses, including widely researched fine arts and speech and debate programs, are reserved for lunchtime or after school. “The students here have a common goal, to graduate a professional of their choice,” says Yarrow. “We have business, law, and a university preparatory school. Some students come back and tell us that the transition to university was seamless. Some of them even say it’s a piece of cake.”

Unlike the situation at many private schools, at Old Scona it’s merit, not money, that determines who gets to attend. “We

‘SOME STUDENTS COME BACK AND TELL US THE TRANSITION TO UNIVERSITY WAS SEAMLESS’

And for the seventh consecutive year, Old Scona has been rated the “top Alberta high school, public or private, in rankings compiled by the Vancouver-based Fraser Institute.”

Edmonton’s oldest high school, Old Scona started up in 1988 as Strathcona Collegiate Institute. It functioned as a high school until the 1980s, when it was supplanted by the new, and much larger, Strathcona Composite High School. After using the old school as a junior high and a continuing education centre, the Edmonton Public School Board decided in 1976 to reinvent the institution as an alternative high school, doubling it Old Scona.

Enrollment currently stands at 338. Old Scona takes in about 100 new students each year, though available that number apply for the privilege. “Many are attracted by the

new students whose parents work as school custodians and others who are academics,” says Yarrow. “Some families drop off their child in a Minivan, while other students commute to simulate each way as public transit.”

The school also draws from a range of ethnic and religious backgrounds, as Grade 12 student Garrett Gossin discovered when he helped found an interfaith and philosophy discussion club that met over lunch. “We had Christians, Muslims, Sikhs, Jews and atheists,” says Gossin. Yet despite that diversity, there is very little friction at Old Scona, says Gillian Linn, another Grade 12 student. “We come here for the common purpose of learning,” she says. “So there’s a lot of mutual respect. We are similar and different at the same time.”

Rising to a challenge

KIPPLING COLLEGIATE INSTITUTE
TORONTO

IMMIGRATING In Canada with no one to welcome you is a bewildering experience—and among at Kipling, the high school closes to Toronto's Lester B. Pearson Airport, used to be just as alienating for recent arrivals in this country. But over the past three years, principal Roger Dale has been changing that—starting with something as simple as encouraging teachers to say hello every time a student passes them in the halls. "We all need to feel valued," says Dale.

"We went every kid in the hallway to know that we care."

Kipling, among the city's most economically disadvantaged schools, has long had a rough reputation—it was the place where kids who weren't likely to succeed bided their time. The turnaround, however, hasn't been through an emphasis on academics, but rather through fostering hope and mutual respect. "In the past, a lot of the kids had trouble seeing a future," Dale explains. "We tell them, 'If you hang in there with us, we have the tools to help you be successful.'"

Dale doesn't have a program as much as a life-making mission: helping students take ownership of their school. "There's no magic here," he says. "It's just that students want to prove that they're responsible." Whatever you call it, the statistics are a testament to his success: since the revamped program began, suspensions are down from 123 a year to 13, 44 per cent fewer students are passing provincial tests, 60 per cent fewer are failing courses.

What has also helped is engaging disparate elements in the community. With two-thirds of the school population having a mother tongue other than English, and with a high incidence of families on welfare, the

neighbourhood is rife with social workers and support groups. But until recently, each group was fighting its own battle. Now, the school holds monthly meetings with a host of organizations, seeing how they can work together to improve the students' lot. "Community organizations feel very comfortable here, which is unusual," says Zsoltine Kim, coordinator of Settlement and Education Partnership in Toronto (SEPT), an organization that helps immigrant students

'IF YOU HANG IN THERE WITH US,' STUDENTS ARE TOLD, 'WE HAVE THE TOOLS TO HELP YOU BE SUCCESSFUL.'

adjust. Kim grew up in the area, but moved to Kipling as a student. "It's true that the community has changed—the school has," she says. "Before, teachers were depressed of the kids, but now it's a different mindset."

Getting parents involved has been another of Dale's goals. "A lot of parents come from countries where school is a kind of punishment you do to your kids and don't interfere," he says. But with Dale's encouragement, they're now bombarding staff with questions in parent-teacher nights, particularly on group projects. "We never used to carry any notes over to us," says teacher Jennifer MacKay. "Roger is the kids' dad."

The biggest change, however, has been among the students. Giving them more responsibility for how the school is run, as well as encouraging them to report on safety risks such as intruders on school grounds, gets them working with teachers instead of against them. Dale is now working on a plan to get students even more involved over the coming year by giving each of them training in leadership and conflict resolution. In the end, Dale's approach is deceptively simple. "We don't believe in throwaway kids."



Special focus ROSEDALE HEIGHTS SCHOOL OF THE ARTS, TORONTO

When principal Dennis Skerchey arrived at Rosedale Heights in 1992, he found "a dumping ground for kids no one knew what to do with." A dying vocational school, it had a student dropout rate of 58. "The job," says Skerchey, "was to create a better school, give it a reason for being." So Rosedale lost its vocational element and focused on the arts. In places that used to be dirty clean-

ing and waterless showers, dance students now perform plays they've written. In the dance studio, a girl in a black leotard swishes her pink hair while stretching. The school has 950 students in its dance, music, visual arts, musical theatre and dance courses, and dances more on the waiting list.

Skerchey's persistence in persuading an initially dubious community that a specialty school was a good idea he's paid off. Cathy Dinley of the Toronto Parent Network advocacy group, whose son is going into Grade 10, lives about how much the principal cares about his students. She tells how he chided us with emotion while advocating increased resources for needy youth at a meeting with Ontario's deputy education minister. It's a two-way street: at Skerchey's school the halls, everyone, from an arm-pierced guitar player to even city kids in baggy sweaters,

seem happy to see him.

Unlike most arts schools, Rosedale Heights doesn't admit students based on auditions. "As soon as you do," Skerchey explains, "you push out kids who haven't had the opportunity to have private lessons or family support." Hard for students have to choose a specialty when they enroll, which means many end up in programs they'd never have considered. Monica Bittman, for instance, had never danced before starting Grade 5 at Rosedale Heights—now she has been accepted in Ryerson University's highly popular dance course. "I could've imagined a few years ago that I'd get into such a good program," she says.

Both students and teachers put in extra hours in the mornings, evenings and weekends for the massive annual showcase per-

Grade students warming up for a performance of Les Misérables

formance, as well as many smaller ones. It's this enthusiasm that makes Rosedale Heights sparkle. "Struggling schools just need a focus," Skerchey says. "They need to redefine their mission," that while graduates are increasingly going on to study fine arts in university and college, there are other benefits. "The big thing for me is to create advocates for the arts," says Margaret Marsh, a Pomegranate Award-winning dance teacher who herself took engineering and economics before becoming a professional dancer. "It's about turning the light bulb on. I tell them, 'I don't care what you do as a career, as long as you have passion.'" The past decade has seen a lot of light bulbs turned on at Rosedale Heights.

niggly things like how you dress and how you look. I can't stand having someone else telling me what to do. Or when you have great ideas, they'll say, 'They'll never let you do that.' For example, she thought her character should smoke. "I would be hilarious, the hypocritical smoking doctor. So many doctors drink and smoke and take drugs."

Despite the frustration, after 10 years in L.A., Oh licks this: "I really wanted to hit a place where I've wanted to be." She's got a list of scenes she's appearing in/on upcoming shows—with Robin Williams in *The Night Listener*, Heather Graham in *Cake*, Robin Wright Penn in *Sorry, Haars*, and Chloë Sevigny in *J. Noddy*. And on this summer morning, she's just days away from tanning 34. "I'm so excited! I've never been so excited for a 15-minute tanning."

"What's so great about 34?" I ask.

The lowdown was no easy sell: "Because 34 is sooooo bad. It's been a very, very, very difficult year." Her expression turns suddenly fragile, and for a moment it looks like she might cry. Then, getting up to find a cigarette, she paces out a whine: "I'm having '48." When I ask if she'll explain what happens, she finally decides: "I've come a long way to be able to say to anyone and talk to you. So let's leave it at that."

THE DAUGHTER of a Broadway mother and entrepreneur father, Oh was born in the Ottawa suburb of Nepean. Margie Parvill, a childhood friend now living in Calgary, remembers Oh acting in a school musical. "She played the villain. And you couldn't take your eyes off her. When she walked on a stage, there was a light around her chest." She studied her end mixed Korean parents by choosing the National Theatre School over university. Right after graduating, in 1993, she starred in *The Diary of Evelyn Lau*, a CBC TV movie based on the raw memoir of a junior prostitute in Vancouver—confirming the worst fears of her parents who saw acting as a gateway to drugs and prostitution. The same year she played British Governor General Adrienne Clarkson in a CBC biopic and landed the lead in Donnie Haggren's, a daughter criminal from Chinese parents—her performance won a Genie.

Moving to L.A., and accepting a steady role as an assistant in HBO's *Arrested*, Oh continued to star in Canadian movies, such as Don McKellar's *Last Night* (1998)—accrual-



At the 2005 Oscars with Payne, in Gray's Anatomy (left); a scene from *Silence*



ing a level of experience unavailable to her American peers. She still looks back on *Evelyn Lau* as the creative highlight of her career, although making *Silence* was the "ultimate filmmaking experience." Because it's so hard to make films in Canada, she says, "I realized that only hard work is good work. But *Silence* was not so hard. I didn't really feel I was acting." And even now, she has only good things to say about her husband: "He's a phenomenal director. He's a good writer. And he implies everyone on a *Silence* movie is a running point in Oh's life and career. As she was walking the red

carpet at the Oscars, her marriage to Payne was in ruins. The film, meanwhile, put her on the map. "It's better to be known as the girl from *Silence*," she says, "as opposed to the girl who's just assistant."

But Oh has fought a constant battle with typecasting. It's not just that she's Asian, it's that she doesn't fit a certain Asian stereotype. Or as she puts it, "I don't look like Gong Li." There was a time when she wished she looked different. "You come to town and wish you had everything that everyone else seems to have. But then the justifiers. I've been happy. I don't look like anyone else. If my face is concerned just at a sound, I'll, doing nothing, it's self-aware. It tips into something that's not the same."

Canadian native actress Waikei Sze, a friend since their school days, says, "Oh is a real star. She's distinctive in that she's so careful as to what is without pandering to the white image of what an Asian should look like. Most Asian women see the camera have had their eyelids done. She hasn't decided to have the surgery to look like a Caucasian. Asia." Sze says that Oh is a "polished, intelligent and well-oiled" but her moments can show the surface—she's a tender core of a woman.

On center, Oh defies clichés of beauty, Asian or otherwise. Her face is squishier than most. You can see the moles pop over the low-laying moving water. And her look is unconvictional, so her approach to glamour. When I ask her about being so small, she doesn't mention Robin Williams, or Jack Nicholson, who starred in Payne's *About Schmidt*. She mentions Eugene Levy. Then Julie Andrews, who worked with her on *The Princess Diaries*. She says she was once in a room with Carol Burnett—"my all-time, ultimate hero." And her favorite actor is Paul Giamatti, who rednecked her way every where in *Silence*.

That evening in Los Angeles, Oh joins me and a friend for dinner at a restaurant she chooses a wine bar that hosted a couple of events for *Silence*. Like most of the cast, she developed a passion for wine while shooting the film. With the discerning eye of a sommelier she selects superb bottles of French Bordeaux. The restaurant is tucked in a place where you expect to see celebrities. No one bothers her, but people notice. You can see them looking at her. Over them, Sze says, Oh. You couldn't mistake her for anyone else.

THE FALL INVASION

The new TV season is overlaid with evil aliens, but the sitcom has returned

IN SEARCHING FOR the next *Lost*, the network has become just that—directionless, blindly moving forward with any TV series that has a hint of the supernatural. And they've almost completely ruled this year's new season with all the ghosts, demons, and monsters and paranormal activity. Thankfully, there are prisons, lechers, pot and Chris Rock to save us from all that unexplained evil. Here's what awaits in this fall.

THE BEST SHOW SO FAR

When comparing the pilot episodes of all the new series, *Prison Break* comes out on top—thanks, in part, to what it borrows from *Lost*. Instead of copying the supernatural elements, *Prison Break* took the basic premise: a group of reputable strangers are stuck in one place and not trying to escape. This time around it's a maximum security jail rather than a tropical haunted island—but the struggle is just as high. Michael Scofield (Wentworth Miller) gets himself sent to a same penitentiary so he can bust out his secret-to-life brother Michael, as, as chance, has done the math on the prison and its inmates and he's all planned out. Not that he's telling. We're left grasping for clues and conjectures that trickle in so slowly. After years of storylines being

usually wrapped up at the end of each episode, shows like *Lost* and *Prison Break* are playing hard to get—and it's working.

THE SLEEP-INDUCING SUPERNATURALS

Each of the five new sci-fi series has one unique selling point. *Darkness* has a great human sequel, *Threshold* has a brilliant cast of nerds led by a really hot, smart chick, *Star Trek* has a cool storyline where a kid fishes a alien alien from out of the ocean and puts it in his family's aquarium, *Supernatural* has fast cars and good music, and *Night Shifter* has attractive reporters with great jobs. But overall they all start to blend together—their loss of water, mental issues, military men trying to cover things up and amazingly horrible situations figuring things out. Blind women don't face

well and kids and conspiracy theories are too curious for their own good. While it's tempting to ignore the whole lot, if you're intrigued by *Darkness* and *Threshold* hold the most potential.

THE WE ARE WOMEN MOVEMENT

There's only so many shows we can have about women proving themselves in a man's world before it all seems a bit redundant. In *Close to Home*, Canadian Jennifer Phearson plays a new mom back to work at a law firm. *Ryan Sedgwick* is a Southern detective brought in to head up a mostly male L.A. squad in *The Closer*. And *Geri* (Doris Davis) is a vice-president thrust into the role of Commander in Chief. On their own, these are all strong shows with appealing stars, especially *The Closer*. But taken together, the female grunting woman is thrown into new jobs, clashes with male colleagues, clashes with female colleagues, less personal life, suffer, regional kids (if there are any), then rise to the challenge (even the cauldrons the bad guys have the five



After *Prison Break* makes supernaturalism weird, including *Darkness*, is the closest we'll get to *Prison Break* season 2

world) while all the men in the room nod their heads in disbelief and approval. How did she do that?

THE PROCEDURAL DRAMAS

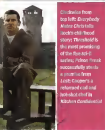
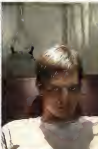
For every one woman in charge, there are a half-dozen of helplessly female victims this season. Whether paralyzed by spiders and mosquitoes, strangled and thrown in the sea, confined to a cage, or, in one woman's case, locked in a room for three years, the women in the new crop of crime dramas suffer incredible brutality. And on two shows in particular, *Wife*, *Widow*, and *Criminal Minds*, things get pretty graphic. The prevailing wisdom is that in this thrashy cop/crime land, crime has to be as nasty and as weird. Even the best detective pilot that's new, *Bones*, has a female victim. But this show catches fire for many, continuing on a train of anthropic logic, led by *The X-Files* because [Early Described]. These women, who help out an FBI agent, [Angie D'Amico] because, have the coolest techs and technology in CSI land—including a wicked hologram machine that can put a face in a skull.

THE GLARING OMISSIONS

But the *Lost* characters are not so simple, and it's not that no one even tried to bring forward any Dependent Housework stories. There's a serious lack of new song lyrics. So, *Love 77* Service and *Beowulf* are some of the only songs that have been written for the show. But nothing in either of these comes close to the delicious melodrama of *The OC* or the quirky suburban angst of *Mean Girls*. In fact, this show that almost resembles *Life on a Winter Lane* to the half-hour dramedy *Wisteria Lane* [shining on cable in the U.S. and on Showtime here], featuring Mary-Louise Parker as an elegant single mother of two boys, who also happens to be one of the neighborhood go-to doctors. In the pilot, the sisters of color competition, starting by with an anti-spoiler diatribe. There are some games, PTA meetings and some big posed along in dramatic magazines. *The Housewife* glimmers man-que, teenage sex or suburban angst, but it certainly doesn't have it. *Work* is difficult, but my guess is that it

THE NEXT CORNER CAR?

Canada produces very few home-grown shows and our broadcasters rarely bring



them out at the beginning of the fall season —testing the U.S. snow-bundle kit out. But we've procured Canadian ski suits about as pretty young things in resort towns, Italian jeans and Whiteies, in the new year. Until then we're stuck with the same old one-offs about important Canadians: Trudeau, Pierre Elliott (a prequel to the 2003 miniseries) and *Shawna: A Life in Eight Seasons* from CBC, and CTV's Terry, about the story behind the March of Hope. Globe's the only major season promoting a Canadian series.

analogy. Not for the faint of heart or for the timid, the one's innuendo with hiserisms, puns, cliches and mind-bumking scientific jargon. But thanks to Peter Dinklage's portrayal of the carnal-genially and arrogant Dr. Strangelove, it's too watchable to be the loudest U.S. hit medical drama. **House** Those looking for something light and fun and dinnertime Canadian will have to wait until the new year when CBC launches Mary Walsh's *Matchmaking*, *Getting On*, *Dyspatching* and *Colin Mochrie's Matching*. **Mary Walsh's**

THE SHOWS THAT ARE ACTUALLY FUNNY
Last year there wasn't one belly laugh in all of the new comedies like most of last of

1982. Chris's parents are loud, they love him with responsibility, and his father's so cheap he puts a price on every food. "That's 45 cents of spilled milk dripping all over my table"—which sounds like a line straight from Beck's stand-up act. Like *Melvin in the Middle*, this series has the right combination of chaos, caring and cute kids.

Kitchen Confidential, on the other hand, is raunchy, loose and fast-paced—inspired by the memoirs of food-bye New York chef Anthony Bourdain. Here, the character's mentor, Jack Bourdain, played with colorful charm by Stanley Cooper (Jack & Bobby), in the prior, trouble-shagger Jack, gets a chance to run the show as a mending man. He intimidates the staff by speaking loudly and wearing a big hat, runs the diner service when a finger is lost in the food, and is caught with his pants around his ankles—and that's not opening night.

My Name Is Earl is even crasser, but so is Jason Lee (*Atlatl*): it's impossible not to like. Each week, former party animal and recent literary adviser Earl will work on his letters, a word he learned from *Canon Dely's* late night TV show, by righting the wrongs he's done to others in the past—although none of those people ever want to see him again. Earl, *Heathcliff* style, has wife and kids on trailer-park types, larking in social situations but perfect companions for a lazy night of TV.

THE ONES THAT ARE IMPOSSIBLE TO WATCH

Whereas, then, one actress had to share the year's good, And there's nothing more difficult to watch than ridiculous characters in different scenarios inflicting offense and violence upon each other, accompanied by a corn load of bad jokes, there's the one with *Mr. Prozac*, which, at first, seems to be about women who self-medicate, but spend more time talking about "his babies and their gypies, or lack thereof." The *War of the Wives* is tame. This firmly comes with a dumpy older daughter, a pretty young son and an androgynous middle child—a female, thus was created, performed and eventually ran its course on *ABC*. But *The War of the Wives* presents—assuming mainly on gay jokes, which really is still an acceptable way of insulting someone on prime-time TV. But over the producers realized they went too far and ordered this live about the middle son. "He's not gay," he yells at a "F" fight, and that's the end, it's not real.

**MACLEAN'S
SUBSCRIBER
SERVICES**

PERSONALIZED ADS

Occasionally an advertiser may ask that we print the names of subscribers in their advertisement in our publications. When this is done, the subscriber's name is printed on the ad at the same time as the mailing label is printed on the cover of the magazine. The subscriber's name appears only in his or her personal copy of the magazine.

If you would prefer not to have your name included in such future advertisements, please contact us at Magazine Subscriber Services.

HERE'S HOW TO CONTACT US

Online:
macleans.ca/service

Mail:
Maclean's
P.O. Box 860, Station Main
Markham, Ont., L3P 8H3

MACLEAN'S 100



OF NO FIXED ADDRESS

Wherever I go, I encounter anti-Americanism—and legions of Natalyas

I'VE TAKEN to calling myself Lady Black of No Fixed Address while I spend the summer bewet and between houses, moving out and moving in, floating happily in a sea-weightless state. The more you hopscotch the more things are the same. BBC, Radio France, CNN, same old stuff. The international of public broadcasters cut across America. I laugh because if you raise your ear to between the lines, you get more news from cross-border commercial networks.

One BBC item uncovered the practice of Uncle Sam to foreign females. "No one knows

how many young women like Natalya leave their homes," the announcer says ominously. "And make the journey into the unknown to marry an American, and then's growing concern about what happens to them when they arrive." My marriage might be so scary about the American man. In the contrast between those needing mail-order brides from foreign parts and the consensualists who strike out to subvert the American bull, my anxiety would be on Miss Moscow.

(Actually I worry about the BBC accepting election of the breed to feed traditions in into Americans. In the early days, a single lady per new broadcast could give them a good buzz, but now they clearly need more to prevent themselves sliding into terminal depression. One fix can't get you high enough in the mud of love. America, you need ever-increasing doses just to keep on an even keel.)

After moving home in London, I treated myself to a deluxe stay at the Berkeley Hotel in Knightsbridge. Quite a few of the Natalyas are now staying at the BBC work there. But they will have to jump out of their Russian bachelors. A bath is dirty even on a few Kuznets are a clean people, but they're now bathing in your own dirty water as necessary and much prefer showers. In this they are closer to the Americans, which might be a reason for the BBC to worry less. My cheerless mind got a lot of attention to providing my unused shower with soap, while the bath I used had soap.

Natalyas come in many varieties. Before Hank, On the way to Hank. Who's they're Bimble with Hank. At the Hotel de Paris in Moscow a couple of weeks ago they were legit. They came through the lobby and if

they turned right, they were likely to be "good time girls" using the loo before entering the Casino next door, and if they went to the lift they were stress-binging outfits for the fourth time that day. The coffee were the same other way, short and expensive.

At transportation is the only business I know that has managed to reverse the notion that the customer is always right. Just out of Toronto in American Airlines, an excited flight attendant came breathlessly up the aisle to make a telephone call asking for police to meet the plane. My seat was just the phone. "It's a level 3 threat." Looking

THE BBC uncovers the menace of Uncle Sam to foreign females. But in that context, my anxiety would be on Miss Moscow.

down the aisle, I saw nothing when I was arrested at LaGuardia, four huge New York City cops were at the door. "It's very obviously closed," explained the flight attendant. The poor soul was sleeping and had been woken up by the attendants serving drinks. His language was foul, but you'd think flight attendant school would teach you how to cope.

Attorneys have discovered that it's much more business-friendly to nod the customer the customer is always wrong. If you value your disorientation in the clouds you will be treated as a potential hijacker and face arrest. The instinct of flight attendants is to give service and out of office encounters kind and helpful ones, but they are bucking the system.

I spent the afternoon in Harlem one recent Sunday. When I lived in New York during the late 60s and 70s, Harlem and the East Bronx were synonyms for danger, riots, Black Panthers, burned-out buildings, striped cars. Mayor John Lindsay, the NYC version of JFK, walked up Madison Avenue to Harlem in a sort of stagnum St. Gers restaurant. I was behind him one Sunday when he stopped on the way to buy a tie at the Gervais Boutique.

Harlem's getting a bit white and gentrified now, though you do see the old roomer wandering on the streets. They're trying to choose out of their destiny as a Semitic sacrifice in that Afro-Caribbean blend of Catholicism and paganism. I went into a Methodist church on Adam Clayton Powell Boulevard. The congregation was quiet, women in a way remembered from some other time. White dresses, white shoes, white stockings and white gloved hands holding crosses. The men wore skull caps, black suits and ties even though it was 98° F. The ceiling fans turned slowly, round and round, and the gospel singer sang "Let my work speak for me dear Lord." My lips fell away. Perhaps these values deteriorated quietly during all those wild years from Vietnam through Jimmy Carter until America started rediscovering itself under Reagan.

Back in Toronto are objection to a city with no open house will be raised in the autumn of 2006 when the new opera opens with a complete Ring Cycle conducted by the brilliant Richard Brindley, a protégé of the late Sir Adrian Boult. Tickets are 80 per cent sold out already. Which reminds me to ask the opera question playing me over next year. Let's make it's brand new 1994 or London's Royal Opera House last night. The libretto was pretty sure to the novel, but I certainly credit Big Brother's supagroup, Ensemble Goldstein. I wonder if it's because daily have seasons for Goldstein model too much more the left's current base of the Jewish state, or just for politically correct reasons. One can only speculate.

BACKTALK



Opera | Singer & Co. will soon be waking up the neighbourhood

Opera singer **Adrianne Pieczarka** is now 5,000 up: that home is even more empty. The four walls are perfect for echoing back her rich soprano voice—not to mention the bar-top singing scene at new venue "We're hoping to bring it to Toronto life," says the recently married 42-year-old, whose spouse, mezzo-soprano **Luana Tucker**, is expecting their first child in October. "We went to take pottery classes, do yoga and buy bikes—the things we didn't have time for while I was travelling."

After 17 years on European stages,

the Burlington, Ont.-born singer has come home. She's looking forward to reacquainting herself with North American audiences—particularly younger fans. "I want to do a Handel opera in Europe and it was like a rock concert," she says. "The audience was cool, trendy young people." But first, she's heading to Tokyo this fall to perform with the Japanese State Opera. She'll make a hip-hop debut next year in director **Adam Godwin**'s segment of Wagner's *Ring Cycle*. The night will be a time to practise a few lullabies. **KAREN M. BRYCE**

"Pieczarka is a very dynamic person, full of intelligence, curiosity and emotional depth. She combines a magnetic art voice with tremendous dramatic skills." —Godwin

TV | Sopranos on the Tiber

One of the titans of pop culture is now something large or small, catches its eye in independent yet simultaneous ways. *Angels in Rome*, for instance, just there was *Empire*, the June ABC miniseries with a fairly friendly account of the murder of Julius Caesar. Then, Oxford scholar **Peter Heather**'s *Julius: The Fall of the Roman Empire* became a surprise best-seller. Now there's *Rome*, a BBC-ABC co-production to be shown in Canada on The Movie Network and Movie Central starting Aug. 28. It offers an adult—every sense—like an Caesar's life and times. Hollywood-style action rules, does it always present proper class life, from an A.D. 30s they were here over the couple to porting



Canada's star is hoping to attract some younger fans—and a few new roles.

reconstruction, the best that in real life scholars still don't occur every two minutes is happily ignored. Whatever *Rome* finds the pace fitting, it shows in its out-of-control sex scene or a throat-slitting. As his way to Rome on official business, **Marc Antony** promises to make a show-herd get, who seems more bored than amused. It all adds up to a kind of classical pastiche, with Roman-style families carrying up the empire like the waste-disposal business, but the factoring, especially from **Gaius Octavius** (Caesar) and **Polly Walker** (Livia) and perhaps with join the over-the-top lip-tongue *Romance* by entertainment. **BARBARA AMEL**



Jacob Hoggard finishes John Intini's sentences

Jacob Hoggard didn't fit the Greenlee slot seeker-after hunt the wonder whether would find that finishing hand in last year's contest was the best that could have happened to it at the Abbotford, B.C., native, who went right back to picking out words he had. Heady. (The self-edited debut is in store Sept. 12) Hoggard, 21, recently finished stacking his associate editor **John Intini's** sentences.

THE OUTRIST THING THAT I'VE EVER DONE... was spent three weeks while recording this album in just a thong. Actually, I also wore sandals, so guess I was wearing three things.

YOU HAVEN'T LIVED... until you can feel both an entire package.

I MADE A TOTAL FOOL OF MYSELF... at a friend's home when I used a toilet that wasn't hooked up. I had to carry the toilet, which was splashing all over me, into the forest to bury it off.

MY FLEET POSSESSIONS... as my apartment, the little feminine when it comes to have done. Everything is reaching. My house is like an first obligation.

IT LIKE TO MAKE OUT WITH... **Martha Stewart**. People underestimate her, she's ravishing for her age.

THE MOST MANLY THING about me is that I shave my upper legs. I have baggies from playing soccer—to avoid chafing, I have to keep them smooth.

FOR MORE "JOHN INTINI'S SENTENCES" VISIT WWW.MAGLANS.COM/EDILE



Maglans is a collection of sentences by John Intini, a former editor of *Maclean's*. The book is a collection of sentences from various sources, including *Maclean's*, and is a tribute to the art of the sentence. It is available in paperback for \$12.95.

Books | Why they died

Revelation: History of the First World War continues, with a vengeance, in the *Somme*. Peter Hart's enormously detailed study of the conflict's iconic battle. Ever since it started to roll in November 1916, the 40-month struggle has been seen as a pointless carnal slaughter. And with good reason: the two sides together suffered an almost inconceivable death toll of more than 1,000,000. On July 1 alone, the British first day, 29,800 British Empire troops died, including the massive loss of the Newfoundland Regiment. But Hart, the Imperial War Museum's and *Maclean's* war historian, will have none of the now traditional explanation of stupid, head-on assaults and brave, foolish soldiers. European nations fought the Great War, he writes, not to gain territory but to destroy their enemy's power to threaten them. That made battles like the Somme—colossal attempts to exterminate while attacking—the inescapable result.



Best Sellers

Fiction

1. THE LAST THING HE SAW (Michael Ondaatje) \$24.95
2. THE DISSENTING VOICES (Robert Kropp) \$24.95
3. LITTLE THING FALL, FEAR (Tony De Zure) \$24.95
4. CRISIS (Michael Ondaatje) \$24.95
5. THE DISSENTING VOICES (Robert Kropp) \$24.95
6. THE DISSENTING VOICES (Robert Kropp) \$24.95
7. THE DISSENTING VOICES (Robert Kropp) \$24.95
8. THE DISSENTING VOICES (Robert Kropp) \$24.95
9. THE DISSENTING VOICES (Robert Kropp) \$24.95
10. THE DISSENTING VOICES (Robert Kropp) \$24.95

Non-fiction

1. THE DISSENTING VOICES (Robert Kropp) \$24.95
2. THE DISSENTING VOICES (Robert Kropp) \$24.95
3. THE DISSENTING VOICES (Robert Kropp) \$24.95
4. THE DISSENTING VOICES (Robert Kropp) \$24.95
5. THE DISSENTING VOICES (Robert Kropp) \$24.95
6. THE DISSENTING VOICES (Robert Kropp) \$24.95
7. THE DISSENTING VOICES (Robert Kropp) \$24.95
8. THE DISSENTING VOICES (Robert Kropp) \$24.95
9. THE DISSENTING VOICES (Robert Kropp) \$24.95
10. THE DISSENTING VOICES (Robert Kropp) \$24.95

INTERNET GUIDE

Mastermindtoys.com
Shops in Canada and the U.S.
FREE gift-wrapping and gift tags



The 100% Canadian online toy store with LEGO, Thomas and wooden trains, Barbie dolls, K'NEX, science kits, a virtual-toy book selection, puppets, arts & crafts, brainstorming, jigsaw puzzles, board games, music, software and more.



Never pay late fees again! Zip.ca offers unlimited online DVD rentals, combined with the convenience of home delivery. Members can select from the largest DVD library in Canada with an average rental cost of less than \$5. Join Canada's leading online DVD service today!

For extra information call 1-800-622-4820 or visit www.zip.ca

Elitist Lake Retirement Living
Canada's most affordable retirement community
1-800-461-4883



Apartment from \$599/month
Townhouses from \$624/month
Houses from \$624/month
For more information or to book your Discovery Tour call 1-800-461-4883. Visit us on the web at www.elitistlake.com

www.tinefindsoftheworld.com
Your on-line source for exquisite gourmet foods
1-800-833-8388

Visit our website and discover a great selection of culinary treats from around the world. Ordering is easy, secure and your satisfaction is guaranteed.

East Coast Discovery Voyaging

Join renowned Newfoundland author, Benjie Morgan of *Roadmap Passage* along with Dr. Robert Kingley of WWF Canada and others aboard the *Imbros*, 104-passenger, MS Explorer as we explore the literature, culture and wildlife of Labrador, Newfoundland and the Arctic, Virgin, Madeline and St. Pierre islands Sept. 28-29, 2005 from \$2,995 — air extra
www.adventurescanada.com
1-800-363-7566



Virtual High School

Fully accredited online high school with quality teachers. Study at home, at school or in another country. Designed for students seeking alternative ways of obtaining OSSD credits or OSSD credits from outside of Ontario or other Provincial/State schools. Online Curriculum, no textbooks. Rolling enrollment—begin today—set your own schedule—open all year. Established 1999!
www.VirtualHighSchool.com
1-313-580-3444

Paul Diefenbacher, Queen's Counsel
Tax Lawyer (On Team Expansion)
1-800-706-3000 / (416) 467-4400 / (416) 467-4400



PAY ONLY 2.5% TAX
Outsource internationally to maximize profits. We can help you structure all or part of your business to legally pay only a 2.5% corporate tax. Profits can be repatriated, tax free to Canada. Alternatively, using the Turks & Caicos, defer or never pay taxes
www.offshoretaxsolutions.com

Avoid criminal prosecution and civil penalties. Before you are caught, we can negotiate a no name (anonymous) settlement. Lawyer-client confidentiality assured. Unlike at your accountant's office, after this legal protection and can be forced by the CRA to testify against you. A substantially discounted tax settlement is possible.

CAN'T SEE US IN PERSON?

To contact with us on undelivered income and failure to file matters, please go to www.seeusonline.ca, our secure, encrypted site.

BRING YOUR MONEY HOME

Offshore tax haven are no longer safe. The names of trust beneficiaries, debit/digital e-money cards, IBC owners and stock traders are being given to the tax police. Before you are contacted we can incorporate a confidential tax settlement for you. Don't leave the problem to your family if sickness or death intervenes. Ottawa, Toronto, Montreal, Calgary, Vancouver, Victoria and offshore.

UNLIKE US, ACCOUNTANTS CANNOT PROTECT YOUR PRIVACY

News Contests Hosting

TransWorldNews a global news site. Distributors of news discuss their news via chat rooms and audio feed. *TransWorldNews* provides, free hosting to selected sites, RSS and content. *TransWorldNews* controls — predict index closes throughout the world.

High Arctic: Canada and Greenland



August 29 to September 11, 2005

Free Air Transportation
Fly free from anywhere in North America to join our historic expedition
www.elfinroute.com or 1-800-741-7996



THE POISONED PARLIAMENT

Mutual incomprehension has reached a peak in the House of Commons

FUNNY WHAT STICKS out when you read the papers. In 2006-August, Robin Cook, the great orator of Britain's Labour party, died of a heart attack. Several obituaries pointed out that when Cook quit Tony Blair's government in 2003 over the Iraq war, his magnificent speech received the only standing ovation ever recorded in the British House of Commons.

So Gladstone and Disraeli and Churchill and Thatcher never won standing ovations?

Wow. Tough room.

It was hard to read an obvious compassion nowadays in Canada's House of Com-

mons we're used to seeing MPs leap to their feet about six times a day. Your MPs will be back in Ottawa in a few weeks, just watch: they'll be standing so often to cheer you'll wonder whether their seats are electrified.

It's not as though the decisions being debated here are more momentous than in London or the sensory more numbing. Maybe the cut and thrust of political debate is simply like licor to suit Canadians' hot Latin blood. On second thought, that's probably not the way to put it.

If you're inclined to believe your MPs are just trying to look busy

Pinnae don't get me wrong. If there's a ditch in this town that deserves to die, it's the ditch of the lay MP. Almost every member of the House of Commons works a lot harder than, say, almost every member of the press gallery. Meetings start on time, run through lunch and end late in the evening. The House sometimes lasts into the night. Members juggle committee work, cabinet duties, constituency files. On work days there are constituency events to attend in the riding. That may not sound like work unless you consider that there can be as many as eight of them on any given Saturday—and that they'll be held to pay for an MP who makes none.

But when they get into the Commons, well, who's kidding who? The polite of debate into much of your argument to change someone's mind. But few MPs show up with their own arguments—it's not unheard



offer government speeches to be prepared, not just for ministers but for every participant in a debate, by barristers in the relevant department. And even fewer MPs have any serious hope of changing anyone's mind.

This is truer in the current Parliament than in any I can remember. It's not just that, with a minority government, there's less room for give and take. It's that after 12 years of Liberal rule, nobody can remember why give and take might be needed.

The experience of government and opposition caucuses has become so distant that neither side really understands what the other's life is like. Canadian public life is made up of two solitudes—the insiders and the outsiders—and the mutual incomprehension is so complete there might as well be a moat down the centre aisle of the House of Commons.

Pop quiz: who's Rob Nicholson? He's the

Conservative MP for Niagara Falls. He's also the only opposition MP who's ever sat at a federal cabinet table. He was Kim Campbell's minister of science and small business for a few months before the 1993 election. And today he's the only MP facing the government who has even that scrap of personal experience of the factors a government has to consider when it makes a decision. Sure, there are some former provincial ministers who aren't Liberals. But nobody with long experience of life in the decision-making echelons of a national government.

This is scorching now. For most of our history, opposition MPs knew not to go too far in their attacks on a government's integrity because they knew they'd be in the big seat soon enough and they'd want some room to manoeuvre for themselves. None of that submit today.

And before the Liberals got too strong to lecture the opposition, let me remind the Liberals that they're already coming. Just as too few in the opposition understood government, fewer and fewer on the government side have any memory of opposition. The class of '88, the last Liberals to watch a government of another party, has fewer and fewer survivors.

It's a toxic state of affairs. Too many Liberals have come to believe theirs is the only way Canada can ever be governed. I hear from more and more Liberals in the House (and their supporters across the country) who seem to believe no idea from another party can be legitimate, simply because it didn't come from a Liberal. The Prime Minister clearly has no time for any opposition MP—at least not until the day one of them switches parties.

I don't think I'm being naive or angelic when I say mutual incomprehension has reached a peak in this Parliament. It's not healthy. MPs cover it up with a lot of lip. I please it doesn't feed anyone.

For comment: backpage@mcpress.ca or Brad Pitt-Rivers' writing, "Tribute to Mr. B," at www.mcpress.ca/paulwells



GROWL WITHOUT THE GUILT.

THE NEW 3.0T-48V ULTRA LOW EMISSION VOLVO X90 X90 V8 IS THE LUXURY SUV YOU CAN FEEL GOOD ABOUT DRIVING. OUR MOST POWERFUL VEHICLE EVER. IT BOASTS A 4.4 LITER, 6 CYLINDER ENGINE THAT TAKES YOU FROM 0 TO 100 KM/H IN 8.9 SECONDS. WHILE ALL WHIPER, DRIVE WITH INSTANT "TRACON" CLUTCHING THE ROAD EVEN BETTER. ULTRA LOW EMISSIONS LET IT TREAD LIGHTLY ON THE EARTH THAT'S BECAUSE, AT VOLVO, WE BELIEVE WITH GREAT POWER COMES GREAT RESPONSIBILITY. THE INSPIRATION CONTINUES AT WWW.VOLVOCANADA.COM

V8 for life

8:23 pm. Waiting for data, ordering dinner.

I'll start with A-3.
For the entree, F-5.



And, hmm...
D-7 for dessert.



The I CAN'T LEAVE UNTIL THE DATA COMES IN era is over.

Microsoft® Office has evolved. Have you? After all, the way we work has changed. In today's workplace, you need the freedom to work from anywhere – not just your desk. That's why the latest version of Microsoft Office allows you access from almost anywhere, on your terms. Go beyond typical cell phones and Web-based e-mail. Step up to "desk-like" connectivity to your data through a variety of Windows Mobile™-based devices. It's time to evolve the way you work. Discover how at microsoft.ca/office/evolve

We're still using Office 2000.

I believe an upgrade is in order.



Microsoft®
Office